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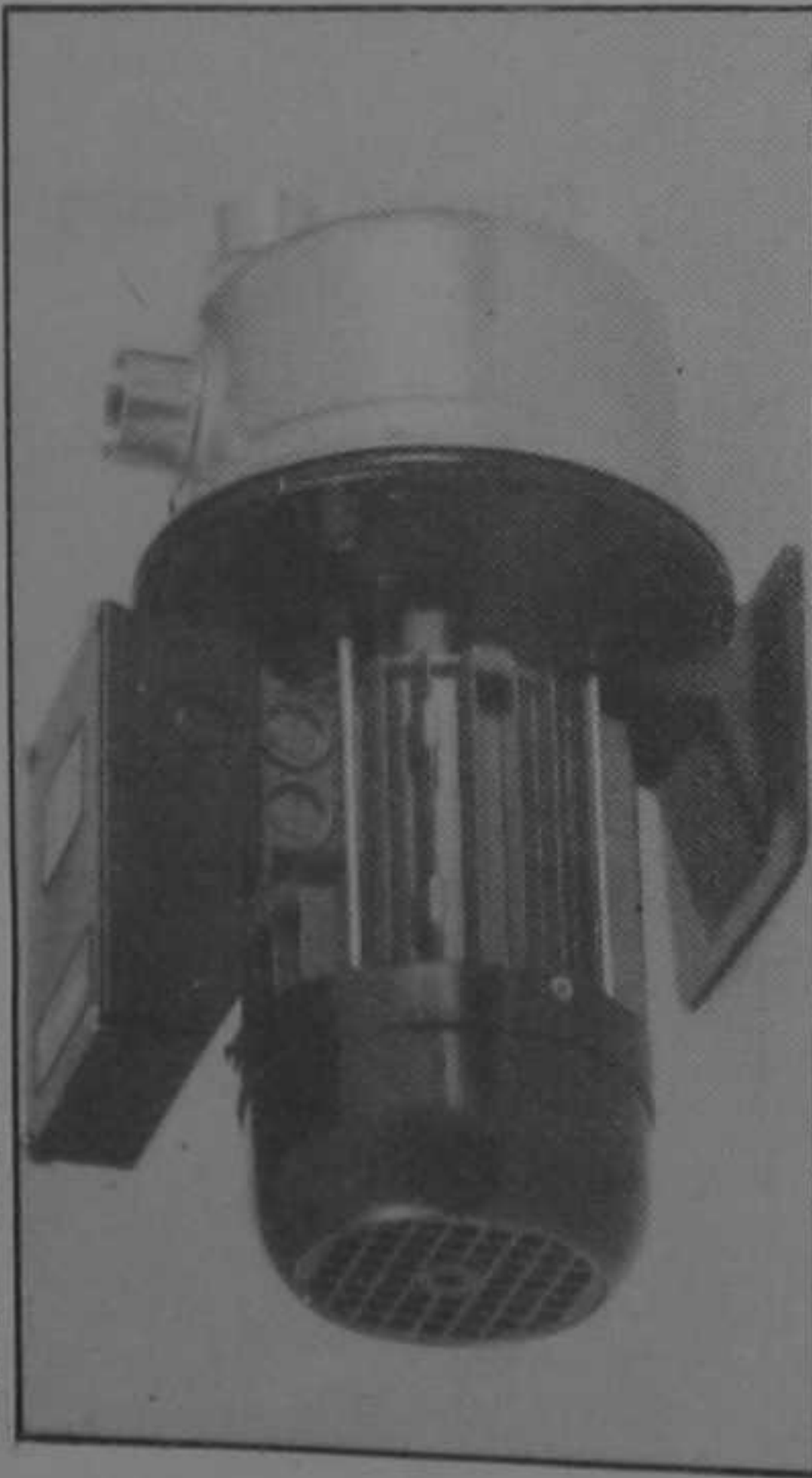
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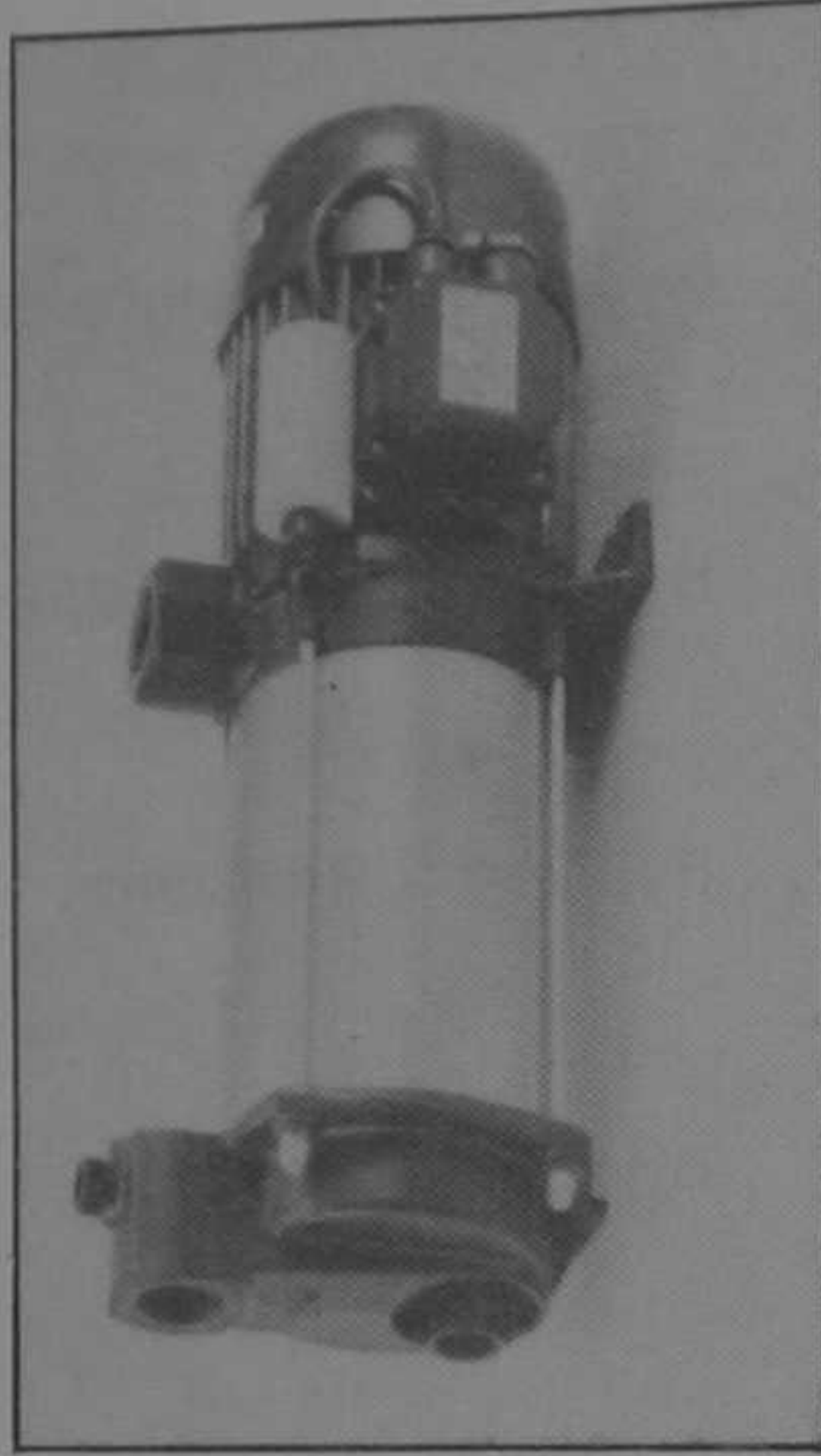
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SHANMUKHA

IN FOCUS

Wish you all a Very Happy New Year and Pongal, dear Readers, Contributors, Advertisers and Well-Wishers. SHANMUKHA, with your encouragement and well wishes, looks forward to a more intuitive and indepth study of the Arts during the Year.

To start with, SHANMUKHA brings to you a detailed profile of a Vaggeyakara of this century, who was hailed as "Abhinava Tyagaraja". Yes, as that Margadarsi Ariyakudi aptly remarked Mysore Vasudevachar's compositions would surely be mistaken for Tyagaraja's but for his singnature - Mudra. A retired Professor of Mathematics, who is a connoisseur has undertaken the detailed study of his life and compositions.

Yet another, from the Sishya Parampara of Tyagaraja, finds a place in this New Year issue. A musician of perfection, a maestro of Lakshana and Lakshya, with a passion for Tiruppugazh and its Laya intricacies, Alathur Venkatesa Ayyar bequeathed to the world of music the titans of the Laya Tradition, the grand duo Alathur Brothers. And he himself sang for "Atma Trupti". The master-maker of 'Garlands' presents a crisp sketch.

A researcher traverses down the centuries, bringing out a historical evoution of Bhajan singing in Hindustani music, focusing on the form as a source of integration, religious and social, as a Bandish etc.

"Shastra and Prayog in Hindustani Music" makes a very pertinent subject for Pandit Bhatkhande Memorial Lectures. Delivered by a musician - academician it enlightens one on the link of Lakshana and Lakshya. You have a Report in this issue.

"Sarvalaghu". How sweet the term sounds. And what a world of rhythmic fantasies it opens up! A musician-administrator discusses its supremacy in percussion art in a facile style.

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VASUDEVACHAR - "ABHINAVA TYAGARAJA"

Prof K. R. Rajagopalan

Among well-known musicians, those who lived for a pretty ripe age are few and far between. Among them, those that were musically active till almost the very last day of life, are fewer still.

Vasudevachar of Mysore (1865-1961) was one such belonging to this exclusive group. Music was both a solace and recompense for his disciplined and dedicated life. So much so, he had a very "satisfactory" death - *Anaayaasena Maranam*, as the saying goes.

Following in the footsteps of his guru, Patnam Subramania Iyer (who himself faithfully traversed in those of his guru parampara of Sri Tyagaraja), Vasudevachar was a composer of great merit and erudition. Even though he is known to have composed more than 200 compositions, only about 140 or 150 had been published during his lifetime itself. Like Tyagaraja, he too composed in Telugu and Sanskrit almost exclusively. Even though Tyagaraja lived in Tamil country, his mother tongue was Telugu; but for Vasudevachar, the mother tongue was Kannada and he lived a great part of his life in the Kannada region (and a small part in Madras). Still, he chose to compose in Telugu mostly - as that language was considered to be quite elegant for singing and eminent composers including his own guru composed in that language only. Poochi Srinivasa Iyenger who was an Asthana Vidwan of the Ramnad Court (and the guru of Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar) also composed only in Telugu. Those were the times when language fanaticism had not raised its hood and people looked up to the Vidwans and composers with respect and awe and were quite contented to listen to their compositions.

Vasudevachar was born in 1865 in Chevvoor near Coimbatore (some say he was born in Mysore). Later the family shifted to Mysore to seek royal patronage. Vasudevachar's father was a well known Sanskrit scholar and it was easy for him to secure a post in the court of Mysore. He wanted his son also to follow in his footsteps and put him to learn Sanskrit. Vasudevachar continued till he heard Patnam Subramanya Iyer's singing in Mysore in 1881 at the wedding in the Dewan's residence. He was transported into a different realm altogether and decided to pursue music as his vocation. Later he went to Patnam (about this later) and did gurukulavasa for a few years and then returned to Mysore. He continued to give concerts and went on a concert tour in 1910 covering Jullunder, Gwalior, Indore, Baroda, Kolhapur etc. In 1924, he sang in the All India session of the Indian National Congress at Belgaum before Gandhiji.

The Music Academy, Madras requested him to preside over its Sadas in 1935. He had started composing his own songs from 1900 and the first book of about 70 songs was published in 1929. His second book, also with another 70 songs, was published in 1956. He has two books in Kannada about his recollections of his contemporary artistes and his own reminiscences. Kalakshetra, Madras, published his 9 Ragamalikas. He, at the request of Smt. Rukmini Devi, moved to Kalakshetra in October 1953 and remained there for the next eight years till his death in 1961 just before his 97th birthday! He had disciples in Mysore and also in Kalakshetra, who have only very fine things to say about him.

He led quite an eventful life and one of the last things he said was - "I have done

my service to music through my compositions.

My namaskarams to all Vidwans, old and young." (1)

He lost his wife when he was 40 years of age and his only daughter died tragically falling into a well accidentally. His only son was not much of a success in life. His home life was thus not so congenial. His students and music were what kept him going along. Rajaram, one of the grandsons, was on the staff of AIR at various places and today, he is a Vice-President of Kalakshetra.

His Works In Kannada

He had two books to his credit. (1) *Naa Kanda Kalavidaru* (the artistes that I have seen) published in 1955. It contains biographies and interesting details of Vidwans (and Vidushis) of his times. Tiger Varadachariar, Muthiah Bhagavathar, Bangalore Nagarathnamma, Moogooru Subbanna, Mridanga, Seshanna and Subbanna Veena and the like'.(2)

"Nanepugalu" (Reminiscences) saw its second edition in 1978.

In this book he refers to many an incident in the lives of persons known to him during his fairly long life. Bidaram Krishnappa, Venkatagirippa, Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar are a few who find a place in it. It is rare for a musician and composer to write so readably about his experiences.

His Musical Works

As far as this author could find out, Vasudevachar was the only musician who published his compositions, with notations during his life time. The following three books contain the gems he composed.

1. *Vasudeva Keertana Manjari. Vol. I*, was published in 1929 with financial assistance from the Nalwadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar of Mysore who was a great connoisseur of art and a good administrator as well. The script is in Telugu, with a foreward in English. The errata is quite long, running 40 pages out of the 290 pages of the book, showing thereby that composing of musical writings was not very easy in those days. Photographs of the Maharaja and the writer are available. First the full Sahitya is given and later notation follows for 70 songs and one Ragamalika.

Some "opinions" by eminent persons are also appended like Veena Seshanna and Shamanna, Palladam Sanjiva Rao, Ariyakudi, and Asthana Vidwan Muthiah Bhagavathar. Ariyakudi writes:-

"A careful examination of your Keertanas will be found to reveal a full development of Bhava and Artha; they would surely be mistaken for Tyagaraja's but for your signature (Mudra) of Vasudeva in each Keertana."

Good words indeed!

2. *Vasudeva Keertana Manjari Vol. II*. This was published in 1956. The script here also is in Telugu. Errata is quite short-3 pages! The printing was done at the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar. Vasudevachar says:-

"Some of the compositions date back to 1905 but some are very recent. They have not been arranged in any particular order".

He acknowledges the help of his grandson Rajaram. This too contains 70 compositions.

3. *Navaratnamala*: This was published by Kalakshetra. It contains both the *dhatu* and *maatu* of nine Ragamalikas. He has contributed five of them; and for the rest, only the notation is given by

him. One of the Ragamalikas included is *Sankara guruvara mahima* in nine ragas-heard rarely in concerts.

His Methods of Composing

Rarely do we come across composers recording how they started on composing along with details of the occasion of such creations. It is usually divinely inspired. We do, however, have "stories" about the inspiration of a song composed. Classic example being Tyagaraja's "*Terateeyagarada*" before the closed doors of the temple of Tirumala. Vasudevachar has himself given some information in his books.

There was a palace official, Gopalaraja Urs who was a good friend and he was insisting that with his knowledge of the classics, Sanskrit language and music, Acharya should compose new songs for the sake of posterity. Acharya was not impressed and said that there were already many songs of great composers. Urs insisted. Soon there erupted an epidemic of plague in Mysore State in which thousands died. Acharya and Urs had pitched tents outside camps and once again Urs entreated his friend to oblige now at least.

Acharya had to relent and he composed his first song in Mayamalavagowla "*Chintayeham Janakee Kantam*" on Lord Sri Rama. It is significant that Muthuswami Dikshitar's first composition is also in this Raga only).

Later he composed many songs on this Istadevata of his. He says:

"I had done Ramanama Paraayanam, and because of my association with Patnam Subramania Iyer, of Sishya Parampara of Saint Tyagaraja, who was a Rama Bhakta, this happened so naturally".

He showed it later to a professor who appreciated it and blessed him saying that he would compose hundreds of such songs. (He did it later). Later, Acharya says, he decided to follow a pattern in his compositions, First he started with the Dwadasa Namas(1) of Lord Vishnu. These form part of the Archana and is common to all the Trimathasthas-Madhawa, Srivaishnava and Smartha. The songs and the Namas are given below in the form of table. Details of colour, weapons and direction are given by Sri Vedanta Desika in his treatise *Panniru Namangal*.

Number	Title	Lord's Name	Colour	Weapons	Direction
125	<i>Srikesava</i>	Kesava	Gold	Four Chakras	East
66	<i>Narayanam</i>	Narayana	Blue	Four Conches	West
4	<i>Bhaja Madhavam</i>	Madhava	Indra neelastone	Four Gadas	Urdhu (top)
55	<i>Mamavasu Govinda</i>	Govinda	Moon-white	Four Bows	South
117	<i>Satatam Sri Vishnum</i>	Vishnu	Gold like the lotus pollen	Four Ploughs	North
51	<i>Madhusudhanam</i>	Madhusudhana	Lotus	Four pestles	South East
135	<i>Trivikrama</i>	Trivikrama	Agni	Four rapiers	South West
136	<i>Vamanam</i>	Vamana	Young Sun	Four Vajra Ayudhas	North West
123	<i>Sridharapahi</i>	Sridhara	White Lotus	Four Swords	North East
94	<i>Paripahimam Sri Hrusheekesa</i>	Hrusheekesa	Lightning	Four Mudgara	Adhara (down)
85	<i>Palaya Sripadma</i>	Padmanabha	Surya	Panchayudhas	Mind
16	<i>Damodaram</i>	Damodara	Young Surya	Four Prasaas	Inside and outside the body

(1) Srivaishnavas have 12 Urdhva Pundrams or Namams, on their bodies for these 12 names of Vishnu.

(2) The numbers refer to the alphabetical list appended to the article.

(1) Quoted by TSP in Souvenir by SARASWATHI in 1984 on Sri K. Vasu.
(2) See SHANMUKHA, Vol. XX, No.2 for a few extracts by this author).

Vasudevachar has followed this list with another 12 more which have been published in Vol. II of his *Kirtana Manjari*. They are:-

Number	Title	Vishnu's Name
115	Samkarshanam	Samkarshana
140	Vasudevam	Vasudeva
99	Pranamami Sri	Pradyumna
2	Aniruddhaam	Aniruddha
105	Purushottama Palaya	Purushottama
7	Bhajami Santatam	Adhokshaja
57	Manasa Vachasa	Narasimha
10	Bhavayachyutam	Achyuta
40	Janardanam	Janardana
141	Upendram	Upendra
32	Hare paripahi	Hari
82	Pahi Krishna	Krishna Vasudeva

Some songs were composed under special circumstances. A few examples only would do. While some Vidwans were discussing the Raga Kathanakutoohala, one of them remarked that it was not easy to compose in that raga. Bitten to the quick Acharya asked for a pencil and paper (pens were not easy to come by in those days) and composed almost on the spot a Swarajati, Varna and Kriti (*Neeverakshakudu* and *Neekeladaya*). No Varna has been published in these 2 volumes.)

"Inspirations"

Acharya disarmingly says that some commented that his compositions were quite simple and did not need much Sadhaka to learn and render. Thus were born the following Kritis *Rara Rajeevalochana* (Mohana), *Harinibhajinche* (Salagabhairavi) and *Kanikaramuto* (Kalyani) etc. He modestly accepts that but for such incidents, these Kritis might not have taken shape.

Muthiah Bhagavathar was organising a Tyagaraja festival in Mysore and Vasudevachar's humble tribute was in the form of a song on Tyagaraja. *Srimadadi Tyagaraja guruvarnam* (Kalyani). He followed this up with Kritis in praise of Guru Raghavendra and Purandaradasa also.

ed in Vol. II of his *Kirtana Manjari*. They are:-

At another time, a musician, a Nagaswaram player, according to the composer remarked in the presence of King Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV that we need not have 72 Melakartas as there are not many songs in at least 36 of them. The Maharaja kept quiet then, but asked his Asthana Vidwans later to compose songs in such Melas, as he was sure that our forefathers would not have given that long list without reason. (It might be recalled that the Grand Oldman of Music of our times Semmangudi also had voiced a similar opinion some decades back). Thus were born Kritis like "*Mahatmule*" in Rishabhapriya. Many others, Acharya says, took shape as and when "Manodharma flashed on me".

At another place, Acharya says,

"Each day I used to go to get Tulasi leaves from the nearby "forests" (there were such "forests" inside the city limits those days) and would think of the words of a Kirtana. I would then go home do pooja and offer the Sahitya before the God. In the evening, I and my Veena pupil Sivaramayya would sit together and compose music to the Sahitya".

It was his greatest privilege that he got to compose the music for Valmiki Ramayana right at the fag end of his life at Kalakshetra. When Rukmini Devi decided to stage dance dramas, she selected the following three -

Kutralakuravanji (music by Tiger's brother, Krishnamacharya), *Kumara Sambhava* (Tiger Varadachariar himself) and *Ramayana* (Vasudevachar). The Acharya wanted to offer the first episode upto Sita Swayamvaram, at Lord Srinivasa's feet. He says that Rukmini Devi was kind enough to arrange them to go there and do it the way they wanted.

"We reached the *Sanctum Sanctorum* at 4 p.m., the doors were closed after the pooja and would not open till the evening. I decided that I was unlucky and would sing the songs even before the closed doors! We started and reached the stage when Janaka offers his daughter Sita to Sri Rama in marriage. Evidently, some devotee had arranged for a Garuda Seva to the Lord and the Utsava was going on outside the temple. At the end, the Utsava Murti was being brought to the Garbha Griha and this event took place just as we were singing! Our joy knew no bounds and I came away with the feeling that the Lord had accepted my offering."

Smt. M.B. Vedavalli in her thesis for Ph.D. on the Musicians of the Royal Court of the old Mysore State (it has since been published as a book) says that Vasudevachar even when alive, was considered to be one of the great Vaggeyakaras of the post - Tyagaraja period.

Certainly his output is prolific.

"The songs are known for their devotional content. The cream of Raga-bhava floats in them. Mellifluousness is one of the characteristic features. Madhyamakala Sahitya and brilliantly phrased Chittaswaras abound. Some of them are very suitable for orchestral rendering, e.g., *Budhamanohari*, *Karuninchi*. Alliteration and Prasa are also seen in profusion.

In many cases, the Raga names are also interwoven (following Dikshitar's style) with his own Mudra *Vasudeva*. Out of the nine Ragamalikas published by him, for five both the *dhatu* and *matu* are provided by him. In his Aadhi-Vamana Stotra in Ata Tala, Viloma Chittaswaras are added in a single Avarta-each anga set to a different Raga. He appears to have followed Tyagaraja in some and Dikshitar in some others".

N.R. Bhuvarahan opines that there would be about 300 compositions of

Acharya containing all varieties -Swarajati, Varna, Kriti, Tillana, Ragamalika and the like.

"I published about 100 of his Kritis with Swara notation in the *Swadesamitran* weekly with the help of the swara given by Vidwan T. K. Ramaswamy Iyengar, who wrote them as K.V. sang the songs!"

He is said to have composed a Ragatalamalika in all the 35 Suladi Talas (Swarajati according to NRB) and taught it to Mani Krishnaswamy. According to Srivatsa, his "*Palukavademi*" in Devamanohari is itself enough to immortalise him. So are the Kritis, *Brocheva* (Khamas), *Rararajeeva* (Mohana), *Pranatharthihara* (Chenchurutti) and *Janakimanoharam* (Maand).

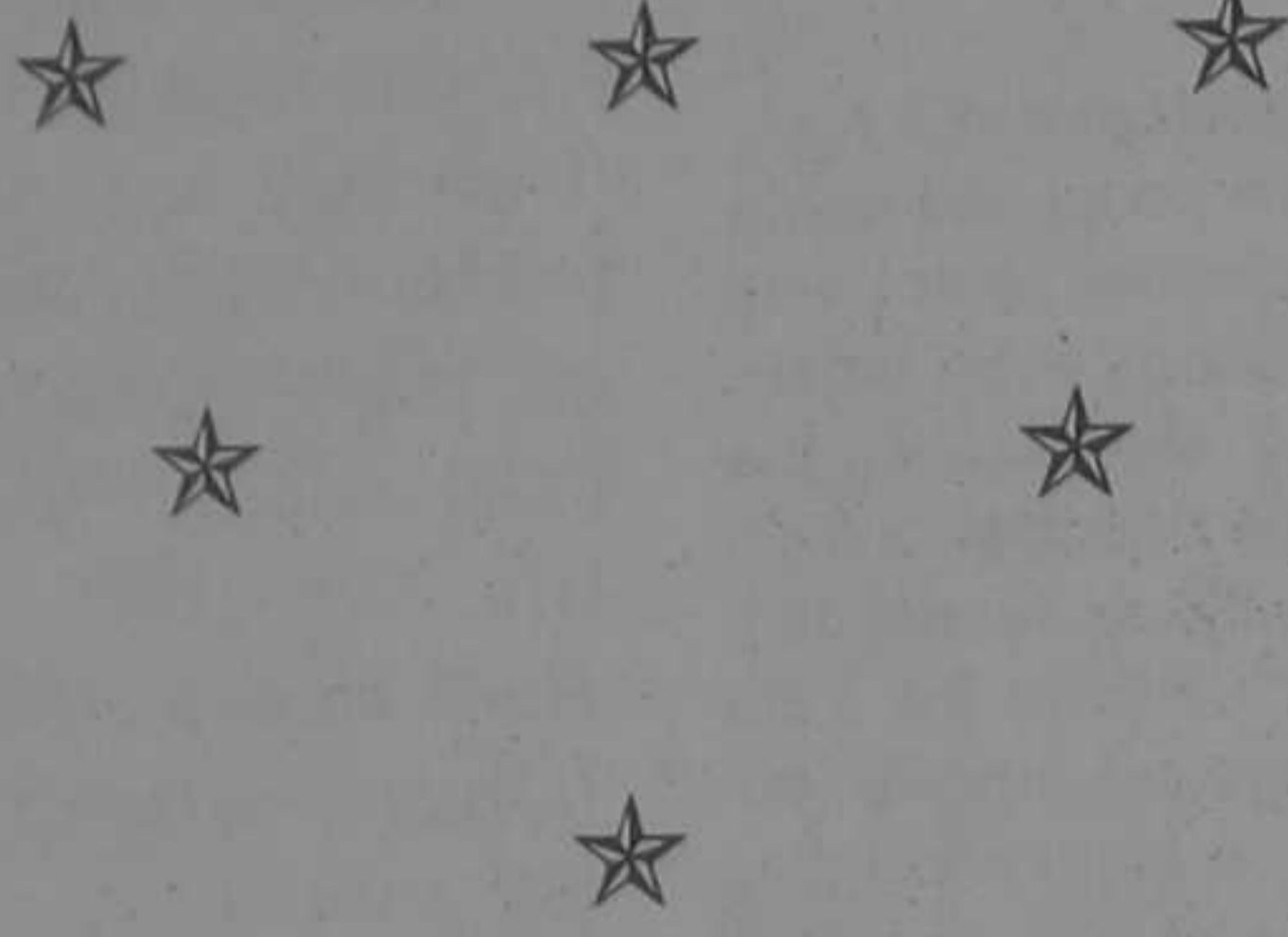
An Analysis

To briefly analyse his compositions, 94 of them are in Sanskrit and the rest in Telugu. Only one is in Kannada - "*Karuniso*" in Saraswatimanohari (not included in the Alphabetical list).

The Ragas used are about a 100. Not only the Rakti Ragas, but Ghana Ragas also-Kamavardhini, Kalyani, Bhairavi, Sankarabharanam, Todi, Simhendramadhyamam, Shanmukhapriya, Harikambhoji, Kharaharapriya, Khamas, Natakuranji, Surati, Navarasakannada, Pushpalata, Maand, Sahana, Sriranjani, Sama, Begada, Bilahari, Mohana, Madhyamavati, Kedaragowla, Behag, Darbar, Nayaki, Purvikalyani and the like. To cite a few rarely sung ragas-Dharmavati, Rishabhapriya Megharanjani, Varunapriya, Salagabhairavi, Latangi, Sunadavinodini, Gambheera Nattai, Gamanasrama, Natakapriya, Kokilapriya and the like. Pushpalatha appears to be a favourite of his-has two compositions in it and has used it as the first raga in his Ragamalika.

Among the Talas used, the most common one is Chaturasra Triputa (Adi) which is a feature of almost all composers past

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and present, Vasudevachar appears to prefer this nomenclature (according to the Suladi Tala principle) to the commonly used Adi Tala. Tisra Roopaka, Chaturasra Roopaka (the common Roopaka), Misra Chapu, Tisra Triputa, Khanda Triputa are some of the other Talas used.

Following his Pracharya (Guru's Guru), Acharya had as his Ishtadevta Lord Rama, on whom he has composed a large number of songs. Besides he has songs on Vishnu's other incarnations as well - including the Dwadasa Namas and another set of Dwadasa Namas referred to earlier. Being a Madhwa, he has offered a Kriti on Lord Hayagriva and Guru Raghavendra also. He has two Adhyatmika Kritis also (his own nomenclature.)

Rukmini Devi recalls that the first sloka that Acharya set tune to was "*Tapaswadhyaniratam*" in Athana: and when Karaikudi Veena Sambasiva Iyer (who was also in Kalakshetra then) heard this he said if I was a Maharaja, I would give you a crore of rupees for this one song itself". Such was the appreciation that Acharya received from his contemporaries who were also luminaries.

As A Musician

Vasudevachar's greatness does not lie in his capacity as a composer/tune - setter only. He was a performing musician of no mean merit as well. His father who was a well-known Sanskrit scholar wanted him to take up the same line. Vasu did attend the Samskrita Patasla for some time. But when he listened to Patnam Subramania Iyer's concert in Mysore at a wedding in Dewan Seshadri Iyer's home, his thoughts turned to music and then and there he decided to learn music from Patnam only! It was a pious and fond wish, but Vasu, the young lad, had no means to go to Tiruvaiyaru where his future guru lived. (He later

migrated to Madras and earned the sobriquet "Patnam".)

Even his father was against him taking up a musical career, let alone think of going to a far-off place like Tiruvaiyaru. So he decided on this course of action. The then Maharaja Chamaraja Wodeyar used to go on horseback to the Chamundi hills to worship the titular deity Mahishasuramardini. Vasu presented himself before him at the foot of the hills and offered his respectful obeisance for a number of days. After some time, the Maharaja enquired of him who he was and why he was paying this obeisance day after day. Vasu expressed his wish to go to Tiruvaiyaru to learn music. The Maharaja asked him to come to the palace and teach Sanskrit lessons to the children for a few days and Vasu promptly obeyed. After some days, the Maharaja graciously permitted him to go as he wanted and sanctioned a clothing allowance also. Vasu spent six years from 1884-1890 at Tiruvaiyaru.

Patnam had two other disciples then - Kempe Gowda of Coimbatore and Parameswara. Vasu's share of the work of the household was to wash the clothes, the copper vessels and store drinking water and press the feet of the master till he fell asleep. His grandson Rajaram has recalled that Acharya used to say that he was lazy by temperament and took some time to get used to this routine. Patnam taught him his own favourite Varnam first-*Marachitlundede* in Bagada. The guru's voice was ideally suited to Madhyamakala Nadai and medium tempo and he had a mastery over his style. "His music was like the gait of a state elephant moving in a royal procession with dignity".

After returning to Mysore, Vasudeva had the honour of performing before the Maharaja with Veena Seshanna and Subbanna and many other Vidwans in the assembly. Maharaja was pleased with the

musical rendering and asked the elder vidwans to bless the young man so that he may shine and bring glory to Mysore! And what a glory he brought not only to Mysore but to the whole world of music!

According to Tiger Varadachariar, Vasudevachar's way of singing *Thanam* was the *real ancient* way. Rukmini Devi asserts that she has not heard anything like before or after listening to the Acharya! He was a brilliant exponent of *Thanam* singing in *Madhyamakala*.

Ariyakudi met him frequently and has also contributed an appreciation to his Vol. of *Kirtna Manjari*. The Acharya used to say that among men Ariyakudi and among women M.S. Subbulakshmi should sing his kritis for full effect.

Acharya had a deep bass voice, could execute *Sancharas* effortlessly in *Mandara* and *Madhya Sthayis*. He did not lose his control over his voice even towards the end of his life, says Vatsala Bhaskaran. But one of his pupils says that he had difficulties in the higher reaches of the *Tara Sthayi*. His range was from *Anumandra Panchama* to *Tara Rishabha* or *Gandhara*! He could sing for hours on end and still appear fresh for another session of singing.

An Episode

Once, says a disciple, there was a feast in Veena Seshanna's house. The meal was sumptuous and everyone was Satiated. Veena Seshanna, rather mischievously, suggested that Acharya should sing. Being the simple and naive person that he was, Acharya, without accompaniments sang from 4 to 10 p.m., and then asked whether he should continue or stop! Seshanna was embarrassed and honoured him with the *Peetambara* that adorned the image of Srikrishna in his house! Bidaram Krishnappa wanted to be associated with the honouring and so held one end of the cloth with all reverence.

For sometime, he used to conduct *Bhajans* in his house and on one occasion sang the *Raga Sahana* for an hour and a half. His teaching consisted of sustained demonstration says Yoga Narasimhaiah, another pupil of his.

In Acharya's opinion a *Varna* should be practised in three *Kalas* and *again in Trikala in the reverse order*. Such an exercise would give good control over one's voice and make his *Laya* perfect.

An important part of the post -*Pallavi* singing in a concert was singing of a *Stotra* (or *Virutham* in Tamil) as a *Ragamalika*. Ariyakudi was an expert in this. (In Mysore, the author has seen such singing after *payasam* was served at a meal and before the curd rice.) The Acharya was well known for singing such *Slokas* expounding the mood and meaning in appropriate *Raga bhavas*.

He could imitate the sound of conch and veena in his voice, according to one of his sishyas.

Anecdotes

The following incident has been narrated by the Acharya himself. A learned Advocate (D. Raghavacharya) of Bangalore was also a landowner of repute and used to arrange for Acharya's concerts. Once, before the concert started, the patron gave him a big notebook which listed all the *Kirtanas* that he had heard. He wanted Acharya to sing new ones, on the stipulation that for every new one not in the list he would get Rs.5/-. Acharya modestly says that he sang 30 such *Kirtanas* when the patron interposed "please stop, Acharya! The total is increasing!" (He does not mention the year, but it must be perhaps in the early 'fifties if not earlier. Rs. 5/- then was really a good sum. As this author remembers, one could buy 24 yds. of KR Mills shirting for that amount!)

Another incident related by him refers to the Mysore Maharaja, Nalwadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar. Once the *Teppotsava* (float festival) of *Chamundeeswari* was going on at the *Chamundi hills*. On the float were *Vidwans* offering their *Sangeetanjali* to the deity. The Maharaja was seated on the steps at a decorated place. He had asked that the song "*Mahishasura Mardini*" of *Dikshitar* in *Narayani Raga* be sung by Acharya and Bidaram Krishnappa who were on the float. Both of them were in a fix as they did not know the *Kriti*! But Violinist Dodda Venkataramanayya said he knew only the *Pallavi* and sang it for them. So the two decided to sing the *Pallavi* alone, with *Sancharas*, *Niravals* and *Swaras* as the float came near the Maharaja. They thought they had managed the "affair" well, as the float went on its rounds! But no! They got a call from the Maharaja the very next day and when they went to him, he remarked that the song was good as far as it was sung, but he would like to hear the whole from them and gave them a day to do the job! Needless to say that both felt rather shamefaced!

Honours & Titles

From the royal house of Mysore, Vasudevachar received the titles "*Sangita Sastra Visharada*" and "*Sangita Sastra Ratna*". From *Tanjavaur*, he got the title, "*Sangita Bhavagna Sikhamani*". Others which he received were "*Sangita Kala Kovida*", "*Gayanacharya*", "*Sarasagana Siromani*". He was conferred the *Sangita Kalanidhi* by the *Madras Music Academy* in 1935. He received the *Presidential Award* in 1954 and was conferred the *Padmabhushan* in 1960.

His Disciples

The Maharaja of Mysore acknowledged him as guru for five years! Simplicity and grandeur are the characteristics of his diction and the kritis are full of *Bhava*,

opined the King. Fine examples of literary charm can be found in his *Begada Kriti* - "*Manasa-Vachasa-Sirasa*". H. Yoganara simhaiah, N. Chennakesavaiah, B.K. Padmanabha Rao, D. Pasupathi at *Kalakshetra* were some of his other disciples. Many a *vidwan/vidushi* learnt some *Kritis* from him. Mention may be made of *Palghat Narayanaswamy*, *Mani Krishnaswamy*, *Sandhyavandanam Srinivasa Rao*, M.S. Subbalakshmi.

As A Person

Yoganarasimhaiah whose association spanned a long thirty years, says that never once did he utter anything uncomplimentary about any of his contemporaries or others. He also says that Acharya refused to compose a string of 100 songs in *Kannada* on *Chamundeswari* - even at the risk of royal displeasure!

"He would live in our hearts for ever - "*Vasati iti Vasuhu*" - true to his name concludes the fond and respectful disciple. He also says that Acharya's admirers built a house for him in Mysore - but destiny willed otherwise as Acharya passed away in *Adyar*. He died on the eve of his 97th birthday. It was an *Adhikamasa* (*Jyeshtha*) and his grandson and *Kalakshetra* had decided to release "*Nenepugalu*" on his birthday in the *Nija masa*. Both his son and grandson had helped him to write this book, as well as the earlier one which was released on his 90th birthday.

It is nearly 35 years since he passed away in 1961. Only memories of association can be cited. This author remembers (in the late 'forties) that Acharya was such a simple and straightforward person, that he would oblige anyone who asked him to sing! According to Rukmini Devi, he was a brilliant conversationalist, but would talk without conceit. "Simple like a child", she says, "easily approachable humorous and gracious". He would compose *Slokas* in

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Sanskrit with a lot of humour in them and recite and explain them. N.R. Bhuvanarohan also speaks of his shy and retiring nature generally; but Acharya was an eloquent speaker with a subtle sense of wit. Essor also refers to his simplicity and fine conversation.

He considered it as his greatest privilege that he had the opportunity to compose music for *Ramayana* right at the fag end of his life.

A Great Visionary

Some of his opinions on a good singer and the like were expressed when he presided over the Annual Session of the Madras Music Academy in 1935. Those days, the conference was held at a pandal near "People's Park".

This was close to the newly built Southern Railway reservation buildings. Later, the venue shifted to the Mylapore P.S. High School Hall for morning session and concerts at R.R. Sabha Hall. His speech was in his native Kannada (Kanarese according to the *Journal of the Music Academy*).

According to him:

A good singer should be well-versed in Vyakarana (Grammar), Chandas (Prosody or meter) and other branches of learning bearing on Music; should be capable of distinguishing Rasas and Bhavas that should adorn *Raga-Alapana*. A knowledge of different languages was essential; he should be well-versed in both the Desi and Marga styles. His voice should be capable of rendering from Mandara Madhyama to Tara Sthayi Panchama; and should know how to handle the various Gamakas.

The Acharya valued guru's blessings as essential for progress of the disciple. An incident in his life which led him to compose *Gurukrupaleka* in Pushpalata would amply illustrate - as well as bring out a fine vignette from the Mahabharata. Once Acharya witnessed a drama on "Daana Soora Karna" along with his

grandson, who asked him after the show-how he liked it? The grand-father was too immersed in his own thoughts to reply and went to bed immediately thinking of why the *Surya Tanuja* (Karna) was beaten by *Indra Tanuja* (Arjuna) finally. Both were great warriors, who had studied and learnt their martial arts from illustrious gurus. Why did Arjuna win and not Karna? Acharya's vision showed him that while the former had his Guru's blessings, the latter had only his guru's wrath!. So, in spite of whatever qualities one might have, guru's Krupa is essential-felt Acharya and conveyed it to his grandson the next morning.

A few more lines might not be out of place. Many persons talk about Karna's greatness, his quality of *daana*, his almost invincibility in archery and so on; some would go even to the extent of saying that he had been wronged by Vyasa!. But one has to remember that his great mastery in arms was obtained on a false declaration to none other than his own guru, Parasurama! He said he was a Brahmin-while he did not know whose son he was - so that Parasurama has no hesitation to entertain him as his Sishya and confer all the martial knowledge that he possessed. Naturally, when the truth came out, the guru cursed the ex-pupil! Anything that is built upon deceit cannot endure. Vasudevachar puts it slightly differently saying that Karna did not have "Guru krupa".

Right to the end of his life, he retained the vigour and pristine quality of his voice and sprinkled melody all over when he sang a Thana or rendered a Pallavi, says a connoisseur. Few are given the privilege of living upto the late nineties and in good health and cheer. Even less number are those who get an "Anaayasa Maranam" as the Acharya got. He lived like a Rishi.

Vasudevachar was recognised as an Abhinava Tyagaraja even during his life

time, he certainly was the Grand Old Man of Karnatak Sangita and most wellknown Vaggeyakara upto the sixties of this century. When comes another like him?

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ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF KRITIS OF VASUDEVACHARYA

Sr. No.	Name of Kriti	Raga	Tala	Deity	Lang	Remarks
1.	Abhimanamuto.	Shanmukhapriya	Ch. Trip.	Vishnu	Tel.	C.S.-DNK.
2.	Aniruddham	Saranga	Tis Roopaka.	"	Sans.	MK
3.	Balam Gopalam.	Bhairavi	Ch. Trip	Krishna.	Sans.	DNK
4.	Bhaja Madhavam.	Hindustani Kapi.	Tis. Trip.	"	Sans.	
5.	Bhaja Manasa	Shankarabharanam.	Ch. Trip.	Saraswati.	Sans.	
6.	Bhaja Manasa	Mandari.	Mis Chap.	Vishnu.	Sans.	MK
7.	Bhajami Santatam.	Athana.	Ch. Trip	"	Sans.	
8.	Bhajana Seya Rada.	Dharmavati	Ch. Roop.	Rama.	Tel.	MK
9.	Bhajare Manasa.	Abheri.	Ch. Trip.	"	Sans.	DNK
10.	Bhavaya - Achyutam.	Purvi Kalyani.	"	Vishnu,	Sans.	CS
11.	Bhavayeham.	Behag.	"	Rama	Sans.	
12.	Brochevarevarura.	Khamas.	"	"	Tel.	
13.	Brovarada.	Varunapriya.	"	Vishnu	Tel.	
14.	Brovavamma.	Gowrimanohari.	Ch. Roop.	Devi.	Tel.	
15.	Chintaya.	Mayamalavagowla	Tis. Roop.	Rama	Sans.	
16.	Damodaram.	Salagabhairavi	Ch. Trip.	Vishnu.	Sans.	DNK
17.	Dasarathe.	Bilahari.	Tis. Roop	Rama.	Sans.	MK.
18.	Dayaledemi.	Simhendra Madhyama.	Ch. Trip.	Rama	Tel.	
19.	Dayalekabrati	Sriranjani.	Tis. Trip.	Rama	Tel.	
20.	Dayato Nannu.	Surati.	Ch. Trip.	Rama.	Tel.	
21.	Devadi Deva	Sunada Vinodini	"	Vishnu	Tel.	
22.	Devaki Tanaya	Pushpalata.	Ch. Roop.	Krishna.	Sans.	C.S.Swara Sahitya
23.	Devi Kamala.	Garudadhvani.	Ch. Trip	Devi	Sans.	MK
24.	Devi Rame.	Vasanta.	"	"	"	
25.	Entaninne	Natakuranjai	"	"	"	
26.	Erta Nirdaya.	Latangi.	"	Vishnu.	Tel.	
27.	Evarani Vedanu.	Bilahari	"	Krishna	"	
				Rama	"	

Tel-Telugu; Sans - Sanskrit; CS -Chittaswara; M.K. Madhyamakala Sahitya; DNK Dwadasa Nama Kirtana Tis - Tisra; Ch- Chaturasra Mis. Misra; Kh-Khanda.

28.	Gana Sudharasa	Kharaharapriya	Ch. Trip	Adhyatmika	"	Sans
29.	Girija Ramana	Gambheera Nata.	"	Siva	"	Tel.
30.	Guru Kripa	Pushpalata	Tis. Roop.	Adhyatmika	"	Sans.
31.	Guru Raghavendra	Kambhoji.	Ch. Trip.	GuruRaghavendra	"	Sans.
32.	Hareparipahi	Kedara	"	Vishnu.	"	Sans
33.	Harini Bhajinche.	Sankarabharana	Kh. Trip.	"	"	Tel.
34.	Idi Neeku, Gamanasrama	Mis. Chap.	Rama	Tel	"	"
35.	Idi Samayamu.	Natakapriya	Ch. Roop.	Krishna.	"	Sans.
36.	Indira Ramana	Khamas.	Ch. Trip.	"	"	Tel.
37.	Inta para kela	"	Ch. Roop.	Vishnu.	"	"
38.	Inta Paramukha.	Kalyani	Mis Jhampa	Rama	"	Tel.
39.	Janaki Manoharam.	Maand.	Ch. Trip.	Rama	"	Sans
40.	Janardanam.	Chakravakam.	Kh. Trip.	Vishnu	"	Sans
41.	Kailasapate	Kalyani.	Ch. Trip.	Siva.	"	Sans.
42.	Kalaye Mama	Hindustani Kapi	Kh. Trip.	Devi	"	Sans.
43.	Kalinarulaku.	Mayamalavagowla.	Ch. Trip.	Vishnu.	"	Tel.
44.	Kanikaramuto.	Kalyani	"	Rama	"	Tel
45.	Karunapayonidhe	Surati	"	"	"	"
46.	Karuninchi Brova	Bangala	"	"	"	"
47.	Karuninchi Nannu.	Navarasa Kannada	"	"	"	"
48.	Krupatonu Nannu.	Harikambhoji	Ch. Trip	Rama	Tel	Tel
49.	Kurume Kusalam,	Kamala Manohari	Ch. Trip	Devi	Sans.	Sans.
50.	Lambodara	Kambhoji	Ch. Roop	Vinayaka	Sans.	Sans.
51.	Madhusudanam	Natakuranji	Tis. Trip	Vishnu	Sans	Sans
52.	Mahatmule	Rishabhapriya	Ch. Trip.	Rama	Tel.	Tel.
53.	Mamahrudaye.	Reetigowla	Kh. Trip.	Krishna	Sans	Sans
54.	Mamava Mrudu	Vasanta	Ch. Trip	Devi	Sans	Sans
55.	Mamavasuv Govinda	Sama	Ch. Roop.	Vishnu.	Sans	Sans
56.	Mamavatu	Hindola	Ch. Trip	Saraswati	Sans	Sans
57.	Manasa Vachasa	Begada	"	Vishnu	Sans	Sans
58.	Marachiti vemo	Purvi Kalyani.	"	Rama	Sans	Sans
59.	Mari Mari	Kambhoji	"	"	Tel.	"

60.	Nachevida	Natakuranji	Ch. Roop.	Vishnu	Tel	
61.	Namamyaham.	Bilahari	"	Hayagriva	Sans	C. S.
62.	Namami Vidya.	Dhanyasi	Ch. Trip	Guru	Sans.	
63.	Namostute	Kalyani	"	Vidyaratnakra	Sans	MK
64.	Nannu brochuta	Sankarabharana.	"	Saraswati	Sans	C. S.
65.	Nannu Brovarada	Madhyamavati	"	Rama	Tel.	C. S.
66.	Narayanam	Todi	"	Rama	Tel.	C. S.
67.	Needaya Etula	Sankarabharana	"	Vishnu.	Sans	DNK
68.	Neekabhimana	Kokilapriya	"	Rama	Tel.	
69.	Neekeladaya	Kathanakuthoohala	"	Rama	Tel.	C. S.
70.	Neekenduku	Simhendra Madhyama	"	Rama	Tel.	
71.	NeeKenta Nirdaya	Bhavapriya	Ch. Trip.	Vishnu.	Tel.	
72.	Nee Padamule.	Nayaki	Kh. Trip.	Krishna	Tel.	C. S.
73.	Nee Padomulo	Sarasangi	Ch. Trip	"	Tel.	
74.	Neevegatiyani	Kalyani	"	"	Tel.	C. S.
75.	Neramemi	Todi	"	Rama	Tel.	
76.	Neranamma	Chakravakam	"	"	Tel.	
77.	Nimeshamaina	Sama	"	"	Tel.	
78.	Ninne Saranam.	Dhenuka	"	Krishna	Tel.	
79.	Ninnu Nammiti	Natakuranji	"	Rama	Tel.	
80.	Ninnu Nammitinayya.	Simhendramadhyama	Mis. Chapu	Rama	Tel.	
81.	Ninnuvina	Bhairavi	Ch. Trip	"	Tel.	
82.	Pahi Krishna	Behag	Ch. Roop	Krishna	Sans	MK
83.	Pahimam Ksheera	Todi	Ch. Trip	Lakshmi	Sans	
84.	Palayamam Para	Kedaragowla.	"	Siva	Sans	DNK; MK
85.	Palaya Sreepadma	Hamsadhvani	Ch. Roop.	Vishnu.	Sans	
86.	Palita Bhuvana	Bahudari	Ch. Trip	Krishna	Sans	
87.	Palukavademi	Devamanohari	Kh. Trip,	Rama	Tel.	C. S.
88.	Parakelanayya	Sama	Ch. Roop	Rama.	Tel.	C. S.
89.	Paramulona.	Suddha Saveri	Ch. Trip	"	Tel	
90.	Paratpara Raghuvara	Todi	"	"	Tel.	

91.	Paripahimam Para Vasudeva Karuna	Janaranjani	Ch. Trip	Rama	Sans	
92.	Paripahimam Para Vasudeva Vara	Jaganmohini	"	Vishnu.	Sans	
93.	Paripahimam Sri Dasarathe	Subhapanthuvrali	"	Rama	Sans.	
94.	Paripahimam Sri Hrushee	Dhanyasi	"	Vishnu	Sans	DNK
95.	Paripahimam Sri Raghua.	Kannada.	"	Rama	Sans	
96.	Paripahimam Sri Ramachandra	Kamalamanohari	Ch. Trip	Rama	Sans	
97.	Paripahi Rama	Ramapriya	Ch. Trip.	Rama	Sans.	
98.	Parulanu Vedina	Nagaswaravali	Ch. Trip.	Vishnu.	Tel.	
99.	Pranamami Sri Pradyumna	Keeravani.	Ch. Trip	"	Sans	DNK
100.	Pranamamyaham	Gowla	Ch. Trip	Ganesa	Sans	
101.	Pranamamyaham Sri Prana	Ranjani	Mis. Trip	Anjaneya.	Sans	MK
102.	Pranamamyaham Sri Saraswati	Bilahari	Tis. Trip.	Saraswati	Sans.	
103.	Paramata Sri	Kaanada	Ch. Trip.	Ganesa	Sans	
104.	Pranatarthihara	Jhanjhoti	Kh. Trip	Siva	Sans	C. S.
105.	Purushottama	Saveri	Ch. Roop.	Vishnu.	Sans	
106.	Raghavendra Guru	Darbar	Kh. Trip	Guru Raghavendra	Sans	C. S.
107.	Ramabhirama	Madhyamavati	Tis Trip	Rama	Sans	
108.	Ramam Namami	Vakulabharana	Ch. Roop.	Rama	Sans	
109.	Rama Needaya	Bhairavi	Mis. Chapu	"	Tel.	
110.	Rame Vasatu	Saranga	Ch. Roop	"	Sans	MK
111.	Rara Rajeeva Lochana Rama	Mohana	Ch. Trip	"	Tel	C. S.
112.	Rarayani	Kharaharapriya	Ch. Trip.	"	Tel.	
113.	Sambho Sankara	Kedaragowla	"	Siva	Sans	
114.	Sankari Ninne	Kamavardhini.	Mis. Chapu	Devi	Tel.	
115.	Sankarshana	Abhogi	Ch. Roop.	Vishnu	Sans	MK; DNK
116.	Sarade pahi	Yadukula Kambhoji	Ch. Trip.	Saraswati	Sans	

117.	Satatam Sri Vishnum	Kalyani	Ch. Trip	Vishnu	Sans	DNK
118.	Sigguleduna.	Balahamsa	"	"	Tel	
119.	Sive Pahi	Surati	Kh. Trip.	Devi	Sans	C. S.
120.	Smara Bhoomi	Megha Ranjani	Ch. Trip	Vishnu	Sans	C. S.
121.	Smara Rama	Sankarabharana	"	Rama	Sans	
122.	Sri Chamundeswari	Bilahari	"	Devi	Sans	C.S.
123.	Sridharapahi	Jayantasri.	Ch. Roop.	Vishnu	Sans	DNK
124.	Srihari Vallabha	Udayaravichandrikae	Ch. Trip.	Lakshmi	Sans	
125.	Sri Kesava	Bhairavi	Ch. Roop.	Vishnu	Sans	DNK
126.	Srimadadi	Kalyani.	Ch. Roop	Guru Tyagaraja	Sans	C. S. ; MK
127.	Sri Mahalakshmeem	Pharas.	Ch. Trip.	Lakshmi	Sans	C. S.
128.	Sri Puurandara	Saraswati Manohari	Mis Trip	Guru Purandhara	Sans	MK
129.	Sri Ramachandram	Jhalavarali	Ch. Trip	Rama	Sans	
130.	Sri Rama Devi	Sankarabharana	Ch. Roop.	Lakshmi	Sans	MK
131.	Sri Saraswati	Athana	Mis. Roop.	Saraswati	Sans	MK
132.	Sri Vasudeva Srikanta	Devagandhari	Tis. Roop	Vishnu	Sans	
133.	Sri Vasudevasriramana	Ramapriya	"	"	Sans	
134.	Taramugadu	Sahana	Ch. Trip.	Rama	Tel.	
135.	Trivikrama	Kambhoji	Ch. Trip	Vishnu	Sans	DNK
136.	Vamanam	Nayaki	Ch. Trip	"	Sans	DNK
137.	Vandenisam.	Hamsadhwani	"	Ganesa	Sans	
138.	Varalakshmi	Gowri Manohari	Ch. Roop	Lakshmi	Sans	
139.	Varamulosagi	Suddha Saveri	Ch. Trip	Rama	Tel.	
140.	Vasudevam	Kaanada	Kh. Trip	Vishnu	Sans	DNK
141.	Upendram	Khamas.	Ch. Trip	"	Sans	
142.	Yadukula	Ragamalika*	Ch. Trip.	Maharaja of Mysore Nalwadi Krishna Raja Wodeyar	Sans	

* Ragas used are :- Pushpalata, Kedara gowla, Athana, Kalyani, Kambhoji. There are Chittaswaras at the end of the each Raga. Composed on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the reign of that King.

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ALATHUR VENKATESA AYYAR

(A Musician of Perfection)

By 'Garland' N. Rajagopalan

Alathur Brothers (Srinivasa Ayyar and Sivasubramania Ayyar) were the top duo vocalists of repute and eminence who dished out lavish elegance and melodic excellence in classical Karnatak music from 1928 to 1965 with few peers. Both underwent gurukulavasa under the renowned Alathur Venkatesa Ayyar. Sivasubramania Ayyar was the guru's son too. Like two birds of kindred spirits coming from different directions, they came together in training, delighted the music world for nearly four decades together and both were crowned Sangita Kalanidhis too. It was a rare union of two celebrities who knew how to blend their musical skills and geniuses into a common web with matchless mastery.

Of course, once they had differences! On what? Srinivasa Ayyar said that Sivasubramania Ayyar should be crowned Sangita Kalanidhi first as he was his guru's son; but Sivasubramania Ayyar would not succumb to it as Srinivasa Ayyar was senior in age. They differed like enlightened children on principles. Finally, it was decided by lot! One came from a Telugu family and the other from a Tamil family. And yet, how they had brought 'name, fame and repute'. That life-long bondage had its source in the seed sown by the guru and watered by him with solicitude. It germinated into a grand banyan, a life-long, enduring musical partnership! Before we pass over from the disciples to the guru, a tribute to the family may be recorded here:

'The music of the Alathur Brothers had an exciting blend of form and function. Their Kriti singing had an unassailable clarity while their Kalpana Swaras were vibrant. Their Raga Alapanas had an aphoristic touch, brief and

intuitive. They were rightly famous for their mastery and display of rhythm through Pallavis.

'They had a very productive gurukula under that perfectionist, Alathur Venkatesa Ayyar. A friend of Trichy Govindaswami Pillai, Nayana Pillai of Kanchipuram, the Karaikudi Veena Brothers and Mazhavarayanendal Subbarama Bhagavata; he exposed the young *chelas* to their *Laya Jnanam*.'

K.S. Mahadevan

Born in a comfortably affluent family Venkatesa Ayyar flowered forth into a rarely excelled musical maestro well equipped in both Lakshana and Lakshya. He had his training in music under a disciple of the famous Manambuchavadi Krishna Ayyar, a disciple of Sri Tyagaraja. His sense of Laya was supreme; he enjoyed a rich repertoire of the compositions of the Trinity, Meesu Krishna Ayyar, Tirupati Narayanaswami and others at a time when such an asset with musicians was rather meagre. He loved Tiruppugazh and gave musical expression to it with intense passion attracted by the lyrical, musical and Laya affluence in it. Surely the Laya intricacies of Sri Arunagirinathar should have won over the Laya perfectionist of Alathur! Sri Tyagaraja was his Saint-composer of adoration and he sang his songs with lucid clarity, Bhava and Bhakti.

N.S.Vaidyanathan who lived in his younger days close to the great musician's house and knew him very well says that Ayyar's singing the songs of the Bard of Tiruvaiyaru with profound Bhakti and sense of Bhava would thrill the audience and often brought tears of ecstasy among Rasikas. He further adds that because he was economically comfortable, he did not

choose to run after concerts except on invitation.

Venkatesa Ayyar was a Harmonist *par excellence* and was an expert in subduing the highly independent instrument to respond to the rigours and demands of classical music. Vaidyanathan says that his play was much better than that of the famous Perur Subramania Dikshitar.

Venkatesa Ayyar was a contented, self-respecting musician who did not believe in long travels to 'deal' in his music. He sang for *atma-trpti* as a Nadopasaka. He trained many including the Brothers, the Clarinet maestro A.K. C.Natarajan and the matinee-idol of yester decades, the sweet-voiced M. K. Tyagaraja Bhagavatar. Ayyar was a disciplinarian and was strict in imparting training.

He has given notation to the songs of Meesu Krishna Ayyar. He had also given notation to six songs of Muthu Tandavar and demonstrated it before a distinguished panel set up at the Annamalai University and his version was approved. Later T.N. Swaminatha Pillai insisted that he had started giving notation to the songs of Tandavar, that his output alone should be accepted for publication and that he would opt out if not done so. He was insistent and the panel helplessly surrendered to him as Pillai was then Lecturer at the Music Coliege of the University and as prudence

and principles were unwilling partners. The approved versions of Venkatesa Ayyar were dumped! Here is what Swaminatha Pillai has himself recorded.

'Alathur Venkatesa Ayyar had tuned six of Tandavar's songs and had demonstrated them before the panel on the first day (presumably on January 24, 1942) and the panel had approved them. The Registrar asked me to set to tune the remaining 54. Without speaking much, I came out then.

'Alathur Brothers sent word through some that the panel had approved entrusting the work to him only for songs other than the six. I had not the heart to leave any of the songs to others...!

He had his way in the context of his threat, 'Take mine or I walk out'. Later he completed his notations and ultimately, they were published. That was the measure of honour he had for principles and to a senior Vidwan!

If music was his staple, Venkatesa Ayyar was Ekalavya to Tyagaraja. He had passionate devotion to the saint and his songs. He founded the Sadguru Sangita Sabha at Tiruchirapalli and organised annually a ten-day Tyagaraja Utsava. He was a respected Vidwan among the titans of the day like Tiger Varadachariar, Mazhavarayanendal Subbarama Ayyar and Mysore Vasudevachar. His disciples had proved that Venkatesa Ayyar and his music were great.

OBITUARY

SHANMUKHA records its profound grief at the passing away of a great Freedom Fighter and Philanthropist, Shri Muljibhai V. Narsi, whose life was an example of dedication, discipline and commitment.

BHAJAN SINGING IN HINDUSTHANI MUSIC*

By Geetha Ravikumar

The Sanskrit term Bhakti, most often translated into English as "Devotion", is understood to be a major type of Hindu spiritual practice. The Sanskrit noun Bhakti is derived from the verbal root *Bhaj*, which means "to share in" or "to belong to" as well as to worship, "*Bhajasevāyam*" or to serve God in many ways and forms to seek His blessings. There are distinctive Bhakti rituals such as singing hymns, chants; story-Keertans or Kathpuranas (discourse), Veda Parayanam, Pooja etc. Bhajan singing is one of the simplest rituals of the Bhakti Marga which is the language of the masses. It has been in vogue since the Vedas.

Bhajan, first of all means "Ishwara Preeti Gayan", that which pleases God and humanity in general and create *Aananda* for the soul. Thus Bhajan singing comes from the heart, is full of emotions, good feelings and pure thoughts. Bhajan singing has helped a great deal in popularising devotion and dedication to God. In general, it helps one to wash off all sins, remove darkness or *Agyana*, to lead one to the higher path and ultimately to the lotus feet of God. Thus Bhakti means not only sharing with God but also some form of sharing mutual participation among God's devotees. The instinct of praying Almighty is universal, whether it is Ram, Rahim, Karim, Krishna, Allah or Govinda, Vithala. The Bhajan singing Parampara percolated during the course of years in various forms and ways and naturally the preference turned to music to create Bhava and produce great pleasure to the masses.

According to Shri. A. K. Majumdar, the following verse is found in many Puranas with slight variants:-

*Utpanna Dravide Bhakti
Vridhim Karnatake Gata
Kvachit Kvachin Maharashtra
Gurjre Pralayam Gata.*

The cult of Bhakti originated in the Dravida country, flourished in Karnataka, had sporadic success in Maharashtra and was not so successful in Gujarat.

Bhakti Movement started with Alwars (Vaishnava Saints) and Nayanmars (Shaiva Saints) of South India. The service rendered by the Alwars and Nayanmars cannot be estimated merely by their life work or their hymns; for the spirit they generated gathered momentum through the centuries and there lies their unique contribution. The appellations Nayanmars and Alwars mean the same thing as "Natha" and "Siddha" which are an All India phenomenon.

This 'Nath' has been founded by Matsyendranatha, Gorakshnatha or Gorakhnath (Protection of Indriya), who stands at the threshold of the age of the popular saints. The whole of the North India upto Nepal and other lower Himalayan regions were pervaded by Gorakshnatha and his teachings on Hatha Yoga and practice of Nada or Sabda. To all these we find references in the songs of the later North, Indian Saints, Kabir, Nanak, Jnaneshwar. After Shankara, South India produced Ramanuja and it was the follower of the devotional School of Vedanta, Ramananda of Allahabad who was responsible for the Bhakti movements of the North. Kabir, Tulsi and other owed their allegiance to him.

The *Gita Govinda* of Jaya Deva (12-13 Cent A.D.) from Orissa has been a unique phenomenon in Indian Music and was one

of the finest products of the Bhakti movement. *Gita Govinda* became the main inspiration of a flowering musical dance-drama tradition all over the East, South India where it spread from Tamil Nadu to adjacent Karnataka, Andhra then further down to Kanyakumari. Alongside it enveloped the music, Dance-Drama-Keertan and Bhajan tradition at Maharashtra, Bengal etc., to some extent.

Bhakti As Source of Integration

Bhakti movement in Bengal began with Chaitanya (1486-1533) who sang the glory of Lord Krishna and popularised *Gita Govinda*. The sweep of Bhakti movement over Maharashtra and other areas of old Rajasthani, Hindi, Bengali, etc., has been made known by scholars by systematic historical accounts, monographs and translations into English. The activities of Saints of Maharashtra who number about fifty, cover a period of 500 years. These saints have been drawn from the highest intellectual classes as well as the lower classes.

Thus we find the great reformers of the Bhakti movement as Kabir (1440 Cent. A.D.) and Tulsidas (1532 A.D.) from Benaras; Surdas (1479-1584), Raidas (15th Cent. A.D.), Jayadeva (12th Cent. A.D.), Chaitanya (1486 A.D.) from Bengal; Guru Nanak (1460-1539) and Sufi Poet, Bullhe Shah (1680-1758) from Punjab; Raskhan (17th Cent. A.D.), a devotee of Krishna. Narsimha Mehta (1414-1481) of Gujarat popularly called Narsi Mehta, Mira's contemporary, composed the most popular '*Vaishnava Jana to Tene Kahiye*' which was regularly sung at Gandhiji's prayer meeting. Mirabai (1492-1546) from Rajasthan has given us excellent Bhajans. Haveli music from the Gujarat given impetus to by Vallabhacharya (of Andhra) of 16th century, has made a significant mark in the Bhakti movement.

Jnanadeva (1275-1296 A.D.) who was the first in the great line of Maharashtra Saints and a disciple of Gorakshnath composed Abhangas or religious lyrics (followed by Nivrittinatha, Sopana and

Muktabai). He represented the intellects of the Bhakti movement of Maharashtra. His *Jnaneshwari* (Commentary on Gita) has carved a unique place in the annals of the cultural history of India. Namdeva (1270-1350) represented the emotional side of Bhakti. Eknath (1548-1600) who also composed Abhangas, wrote the commentary on the 11th Chapter of *Ramayana* (Bhavaritha Ramayana). The next poet of Maharashtra was Tukaram (1598-1650) who like Namdeva gave expression to his ecstatic Bhakti through Kirtana. The last among great Saints of Maharashtra was Swami Ramadasa (1608-1681) teacher of Shivaji, who popularised Rama Bhakti, in Maharashtra.

Thus Bhakti Cult laid a foundation for composite Indian Culture and derived the best from both the Hindu and Islamic cultures. Sufi Saints have adopted the Bhajan ritual through the influence of Hindu Bhakti Cult and Hindus also have adopted some good points from Sufi Cult. Moham-medan Fakirs have been ranked with Hindu Saints. Sant Tukaram and Eknath sang both in Hindi and Urdu. Saint Niranta (1770-1846) sang numerous Bhajans (Karim and Krishna are not different, Rama and Rahim are one). Raskhan as already noted was a devotee of Krishna.

These saints had many common features. They rejected all kinds of caste distinctions, condemned rituals and popularised community singing or Kirtana. This was possible as they preached and composed in local languages of the common people.

When a composition is sung in Hindi it is called a Bhajan, when sung in Urdu it is called a Qawali and when sung in Marathi it is called an Abhang (Religious lyric, and typical devotional songs of Maharashtra, short and crisp.)

Bhajan As Bandish

Hindusthani music has developed a unique style in Bhajan singing. Bhajan is a Shabda Pradhan Gayaki, meaning words

are given prime importance. Music requires some medium of language and tone. Tone is the flavouring and beautifying part of the medium and language is the expressing and conveying vehicle. Thus Bhajans were sung in simple tune to please God and obtain Aananda. In the beginning various Bhajans were sung as temple worship. Some Kirtankars used to sing during their Nirupana (Discourse). Some Bhajans, Abhang and other types of Bhakti Sangeeth were shaping into a musical form. It was Vishnu Digambar Paluskar who was the first musician to introduce Bhajan singing in Mehfiles. He used to sing Bhajans in Ragadhari Sangeeth (even a small Cheez or Bhandish which is devotional was sung as Bhajan.) This further led to adopting the Bhajans in Ragadhari (Cheez) form. These Bhajans sung in Cheez (Bhandish) style were set in Teental, Rupak, Ektal etc, of the Hindustani idiom. In order to meet the expression they used different notes/phrases to satisfy the audience which comprised the masses.

This made a decisive step in Bhajan singing, where a musician treated Bhajan as Bhandish (Raga, Svar and Tal etc;) and which ensured it a place under Light Classical form of music.

Nowadays special attention is being paid to Bhajan singing like a Mehfil of Classical music (Concert). An entire Mehfil for Bhajan singing is introduced and popularised by prominent musicians of this century, like Pandit Bhimsen Joshi (Sant Vani), Pandit Kumar Gandharva, Pandit Jitendra Abhisheki, Pandit Jasraj, Manik Verma, Hirabhai Badodekar and Kishori Amonkar. Some musicians sing bhajans in light Raags like Kafi, Maand, Khamaj, Desh, Pahadi, Bhimplas and Bhairvi, while some has Ragadhari (Classical) Raags like Kedar, Shankara, Bhoop, Kalyan, Kamod, Malkauns, Hameer, Shuddha Sarang and Hamsadvani.

This apart, different styles of Bhajan singing have evolved like, (1) Keertankar Style (2) Ragadhari Style (3) Folk Style

and (4) Thumri Style. Different musicians follow different styles according to their liking, voice modulation, choice etc.

Bhajan singing in Hindusthani Music has certain important features to be noted, viz;

1. No rules and regulations are followed or observed. There is complete freedom.
2. In every Bhajan singing Bhakti Rasa is the main theme though conveyed in different form, meaning in different ways and names.
3. It is sung in a very simple tune. Language /words are given more importance.
4. Bhajan can be sung in one Raag or in Misra Ragas (more than one Raag) or in a Raagmalika.
5. There is no much Alapa or Thana taken in Bhajan.
6. Except singing Bhajan with the help of Boltaans the Bhava is well maintained throughout the entire Bhajan singing giving it a 'feel' of Bhakti and devotion.
7. Usually a simple style is maintained throughout the entire Bhajan singing.
8. Katka, Murkhi, Meend, Harkat, Phirkee, Khana Svaras are used as ornamentation to produce feeling of Bhakti.
9. It is usually sung in light Raags like Pilu, Maand, Khamaj, Pahadi, Bhairavi set in Kaharva, Dhumali, Rupak, Dadra and sometimes in Ektal and Teental.

Various media of communication like All India Radio, Television, audio-cassettes etc., have popularised Bhajan singing bringing to fore different styles evolved by eminent musician.

Bhajan singing has certainly helped us to open the path to the higher realms of knowledge, removing ignorance in the process and to ultimately surrender at the lotus feet of Lord to attain "Perennial Bliss" (Aananda). Here different messages from various Saints not only serve as an attractive medium of instruction to all men and women, young and old, rich and poor alike, but also ultimately opens up the surest and easiest way for the liberation of the soul (Moksha).

It is of historical significance that Bhajan tradition gave great impetus to the evolution of Art Music.

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"SARVALAGHU"

By S. Ramachandran

The term "SARVALAGHU" so commonly used in musical parlance, is a much misused, maligned expression. On a general assessment, it would be explained away as rhythmic precision well integrated in the flow and professional handling of a Kirtana. But, it is just not that much and failing to grow beyond that. In other words, it provides connotations relative to the perspectives involved.

Fusion In The Song Design

In the first instance, it is a blended fusion in the design of the song composed. We are familiar with several compositions like *Sree Raghukula* (Hamasadhwani), *Banturiti* (Hamsanadam), *Dudugugala* (Gowla), *Ninnada* (Kannada), *Ramachandram Bhavayami* (Vasanth), *Ninnucheppa* (Mandari), and so on. Here the element of 'Sarvalaghu' is noticeable in a pronounced manner. That is why these songs are being very commonly sung in the first lap of a Cutcheri, which very naturally assumes a rhythmic tempo at the start itself. The term 'Sarvalaghu' to both the initiated and uninitiated, in the circumstances, provides understandably a grace and embellishment, *par excellence!* Needless to say, it speaks of high-class poetic workmanship. In this context, it is pertinent to quote Shakespeare, from his play, *Richard II*-

*"Ha, Ha", Keep time
How sour sweet music is
When time is broke and
no proportion Kept!*

What is a cause of this appeal? The artist on percussion gets involved in the Cutcheri and there is a spontaneous rapport with the main performer. In the absence of 'Sarvalaghu' in the performance,

you will find that the concert runs haywire and gropes about like a blind man on the cross roads. Lack of precision to fall on the exact dot and letter space in the segment of the Tala causes a glaring disability and the listeners, in total, feel that there is something wanting in the whole scenario.

Melody In Music

While discussing about our traditional music, it is essential to mention that melody is an integral part which cannot be side-tracked. No doubt it is positively a finer aspect appealing to the cogniscenti. Admittedly, one always looks forward to it. Every rendering of the musician is a creative expression. The performance does not stop short with a mere recital, set to predetermined notations. Our melodic music is essentially individualistic in character. Each improvisation has a specific meaning as one reads into it. In other words, our aesthetic experience gets enriched and stimulated for further and greater efforts to find out what the whole thing might imply. We get emotionally overcome the like of which has no parallel for comparison. It is Unique to our music that we cannot afford to lose our interest as to its quality as we render a song of Dikshitar or Tyagaraja even a hundred times. The creation of these master minds obviously provides an extensive, immeasurable spectrum which becomes clearer and clearer by the intensive application of our minds to them. One would not feel queasy with surfeit in this regard. *Kaddanuvuriki*. *Sri Subramanyaya* or *Brovavamma* are, for example, such outstanding pieces. Dikshitar's Kritis are particularly invested with eternal elements of truth and beauty which will endure for ever like what a Keats would proclaim

"for ever warm-
and for ever young"

- "(Ode to the Grecious) URN".

That is why it is said, music is a universal language by itself. It is understood by different races of mankind speaking different tongues. The melody in music influences even animals, plants and the very elements. Music perhaps may not succeed in expressing the subtle shattles of complex thought. But it is effectively oriented to give utterance to the eternal longing of the soul, to joy and ecstasy, pain and sorrow moving even the gods. In other words, emotion, sentiment and Rasa are the very essence of the melodic lustre of a Raga. The Kritis of Dikshitar are Raga poems stirring the deep feelings of humanity. Indeed, it is said that Dikshitar occupies the foremost place among the tone-poets of the world. Undoubtedly, the compositions of Purandaradasa, Tulsidas, Beethoven, Tyagaraja and Muthuswamy Dikshitar are such that they will continue to endure and bloom till such time the phenomenon of sound shall exist in the Universe.

Rhythm In Music

Having said about melody in music it is necessary to bring to focus the place of rhythm which is pertinent to the subject of the article. As pointed out at the outset, absence of rhythmic precision is too conspicuous to be ignored, apart from the fact that the Cutcheri would be limping along, as though in cerebral palsy, the absence of 'Sarvalaghu' insidiously and in a subtle way causes an undersirable acceleration in the progress. Perhaps in the process of the artist's involvement, an element of speed or acceleration comes into operation. But it has to be necessarily under control. Needless to repeat that we have seen many performers groping about in chaotic unsteadiness in such out-of-control situations. Nothing but undesirable criticism emanates from the audience in such cir-

cumstances. Let us not forget that the audience looks forward to a balanced deal.

Beware of Detractors

In this context we have also to take note of certain detractors who make use of rhythm just to project an intellectual show-off. They have to be reminded that music is a language of emotions and not a sickening intellectual mathematical exercise. This undoubtedly runs repellent to the style 'Sarvalaghu'. In fact, mathematical calculations with subtle cross-rhythm infused cannot pass for music. Music has to be basically melody and where emotions are not stirred in the hearts, the term becomes a misnomer. Let us be aware, that we should stick to 'Sarvalaghu' for grace and glory.

Anusaranai

What is often talked about as Anusaranai has to be given due thought in this context by the percussionist. For the most part, he has to put to use 'Sarvalaghu' rhythm, so as to be afloat with the flow of the song. It is particularly needed when the song is being rendered. Let us make sure that there is no scope for cross rhythm or anything of that variety to come into operation as the song is being rendered. However, depending on the style of the performer, the artist on percussion has to exercise his discretion and deploy such lively rhythm during spells like Niraval and Svaraprasthara. It would be appreciated that 'Sarvalaghu' rhythm adds to the grace and embellishes the Cutcheri in general. Both the main performer and the audience have their preference in this context.

Again, as we discuss, in this context, the issue of vocal singing we are irresistably to cite a couple of examples like the late GNB and Ramanathapuram Krishnan. Necessarily, one would like to listen to the re-play of GNB's cassettes, Rendition of composition, Niraval and Svaraprasthara would inevitably emerge for consideration in respect of the following numbers.

1. *Subramanyaya Namasthe* (Kambodi)
2. *Kalalanerchina* (Deepakam)
3. *Yagnadulu* (Jayamanohari)
4. *Maa Janaki* (Kambodi)

The excellence of these pieces as they are handled by GNB is that rhythmic precision is on the dot at its prescribed place, whether it is Sama Eduppu or at the segment between two 'Lagus' like Desadi etc.

The great Palghat Mani Iyer and Palani Subramania Pillai used to excel in glee whenever they had an occasion to provide accompaniment to GNB. It is even so, with Ramanathapuram Krishnan. Krishnan's cassette's are available to examine the position of the following numbers and prove the point.

1. *Banturiti* (Hamsanadam)
2. *Ninnade* (Kannada)
3. *Enduku Nirdaya* (Hari Kambodi)

The late Sangeet Samrat, Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavata is another outstanding example. A few of his gramophone disc records are available to listen to even today. Incidentally the writer had an occasion to travel with the Titan Palghat Mani Iyer for a duration of full 24 hrs, in March 1975. The importance of 'Sarvalaghu' was discussed exhaustively and the role it plays for a vocal performer. It is also to add in this connection that Sangeeta Kalanidhi Mazhavarayanendal Subbarama Bhagavata was a giant in his own right in respect of Sarvalaghu.

With humility, the writer had the opportunity to meet the Bhagavata in person and learn from him as though at the feet of a Guru his Varnam in Sarasangi. It is a piece, *par excellence* in itself. The late S.V.S. Narayanan (Mridangam and Vocalist) and Kunnakkudi Venkatarama

Iyer (Vocalist) were there to jot down notation and learn the Varnam.

The Inimitable Technique

A small note regarding the performing role of the percussionist is inevitable in this context. One would not fail to appreciate the importance of the subject at the hands of performers like Palani Subramania Pillai and S.V.S. Narayanan. When the facile flow of the song is on, these artists would move along the current making no encroachment, whatsoever, to the imagination and creativity of vocal musicians. They would never project any pedantic show off by putting to use any cross-rhythmic calculation.

Anusaranai To Be Effective : During Niraval or while moving from Pallavi to Anupallavi, they would stop content and keep short at the Samam. The vocalist would be free on his own to begin at the prescribed place of Eduppu. This practice would not cause inroads of any kind on the part of the Mridangam artist. These artists, if they so desired, could have resorted to Kanakku or Koruvais at the intervening places. But their preference was only to give the Vocalist the maximum boost at the performance.

In fact, one would do well to look back at the Gramophone disc records of the early 1930's where, for example, Tanjavur Vaithanna has played the Mridangam accompaniment. This would drive home my point of view brought out in the foregoing. It is to the credit and privilege of students of Tanjore School, without reservation of any kind that they would prove a match for any vocal singer and even today they would prove their mettle on any aspect of 'Anusaranai' Such is the efficacy of Tanjore Technique and its Greatness.

At the time of going to the press we learn the sad demise of Shri S. Ramachandran. SHANMUKHA records its deep sense of sorrow on the loss of a contributor colleague, an able ex-Administrator of the Sabha's Sangeetha Vidyalaya and a versatile musician.

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"SHAstra AND PRAYOG IN HINDUSTANI MUSIC"

The third series of Pandit Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande Memorial Lectures, instituted by the Indian Musicological Society, [IMS] were delivered in Delhi, by Prof Sumati Mutatkar, Retd. Professor of Music, and former Dean of the Faculty of Music and Fine Arts, Delhi University on November 1,2 & 3, 1995. The lectures were organised by IMS in collaboration with the Faculty of Music and Fine Arts of the University of Delhi. The lectures were inaugurated by Prof. Abad Ahmad, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, University of Delhi, who emphasised the need for bridging the canons of the Texts and the contemporary performance practice in the art of music. The theme of the lectures was " Shastra and Prayog in Hindustani Music" and delivered in Hindi, punctuated at many places with demonstration, illustrating the argument and logic. Following is the Report by **Mrs. Krishna Bishta**, Head of the Dept. of Music and Dean of the Faculty of Music & Fine Arts, Delhi University.)

Prof . Sumati Mutatkar started with a self-composed Mangalacharanam. Invoking the grace and blessings of Lord Ganesh, Vag-devi Saraswati and Omkar-rupa Nada-Veda, she offered to Chatur Pandit, the 'father of modern Hindustani Musicology' Pt. Bhatkhande, a tribute full of reverence.

Citing the definition of Shastra as *Shastri cha trayate cha*, that which instructs, disciplines and gives guidance, she effectively brought out the vital importance of Shastra for any subject of study including the creative arts. Discussing the intrinsic relationship between a creative art and its Shastra of theory, Prof. Mutatkar cited a most apt and rare verse by Acharya Bhat-tatauta, the learned and self realized guru of Abhinavagupta. Purpose of the verse was : There are two ways of Vagdevi Saraswati, Sastra (theory) and Kavikarma (creative work i.e., art). Of these two, the first one, i.e., Sastra is born out of Prajna - intellect, and the second, one, i.e., Kavikarma - poetry inclusive of creative arts is born out of *Pratibha*-creative imagination.

In the context of music, both Shastra (theory) and Prayoga (practice) belong to music itself, of which these are the two aspects. In a way, they are mutually inter-locked in the two-some of Lakshya -

Lakshan. The two have their own realms with an interdependent relationship. For instance, the total scope of Shastra is vast, embracing varied facets, like, abstract principles, concepts, terms, polemic discussions, history, codification, along with all the theory pertaining to the practice. Thus, musicology by itself assumes the dimension of a full-fledged academic discipline which is gaining recognition and respect. There are eminent scholars and musicologists who are engaged in scholarly studies and research.

From this vast mass of Shastric lore, what is directly relevant to the Prayoga or practice of music, is knowledge of all the concepts and term/canons, rules, techniques/methods and materials, governing the teaching, learning and practice performance complex of actual practice of the art. In fact, this theory of practice is embodied in the very structure of the musical art. It is like the sustaining substance with which a learner, a general student of music, should be intimately conversant with and much more for a talented learner aspiring for higher competence and professional skill, in practice-performance, Prof. Mutatkar asserted.

From among the basic Shastric terms, Prof. Mutatkar cited Varna and Alankar. Varna is not just a small word of two and

a half syllables, she said. It holds within itself the entire behaviour of the musical sound. In fact, it is the kinetic principle which makes possible the creation of music of any music. As the practical act of singing (inclusive of instrumental music) Varna in its four-fold movement (Sthayi-steady, Arohi-ascending, Avarohi-descending, Sanchari, combination of the three) denotes the tonal movement turning towards purposeful arrangements of musical tones leading to the actual creation of music. As such, Varna could be viewed as the primary musical unit; beginning stage of the process of music-making. With the idea of expansion, narration and complexion, Colour contained in the meaning of Varna, the term also indicates the idea of musical value and aural beauty.

To bring out the evidence of Shastra incorporated in Prayoga, continued for centuries through oral traditions, Prof. Mutatkar demonstrated song-types in Sanskrit and Marathi structured in the Prabandha pattern of Jayadeva's *Geeta-Govinda* Ashtapadis. The existence of Udgraha, Dhruva, Praturupaka Padas and Abhoga was clearly noticeable in these songs. She also presented a song by Sant Jnaneshwar, claimed by the Keertan Paramapara of Maharashtra as having continued intact from the 14th century. Whereas it had a mystic theme, the melodic mode was clearly the scale of the Raga Bhairava with a Gauri flavour. One wonders whether it is to such old traditional tunes that roots of some of the fullfledged codified Ragas of Hindustani music could be traced.

In her subsequent two lectures, Prof. Mutatkar continued her discourse with the concept of Raga as the Parama-Kendra-Bindu or the central most point of Indian music, and the Raga Tala Prabandha tried as its solid matrix for more than fifteen centuries.

At the outset, she thought it desirable to bring out the relationship between the two definitions of Raga-the general i.e., Samanya and the particular, i.e., Vishesha, which sometimes at the initial levels becomes a point for confusion. The general definition runs, that special (specially composed) melodic movement, colourful and delightful to the minds of the people, is called Raga. This Samanya defines a category of musical structure which is called Raga. The second definition, Vishesha, pertains to the differentiating characteristics within the category - the well known in Lakshanas, like, Graha, Amsha, Mandra-Tara and so on. This means that every Raga should fulfil initially the four conditions specified in the general definition and then, under the ten Ragalakshanas detailed in the second definition, should manifest its own distinctive form.

She conceded that such knowledge of the Shastric format, by itself, cannot turn anyone into a Kriyasiddha Sangitakara, but a firm grounding in such relevant theoretical facets is imperative for attaining an enlightened Prayoga-siddhi. This is as applicable today, as it was in the past. Perhaps, the need is even greater in the present age, when the scope for presentation of classical music as also for imparting instruction therein, has tremendously widened and has assumed international dimensions.

The multiple factors and techniques working together in the process of a creative, aesthetic, blossoming forth of the melodic theme of a Raga (as brought forth in the definition) have been placed together in the Shastric format in the term Alapti. In fact, Alapti could be looked at as the focus for the magic of transformation of the Shastra into delighting Prayoga. All Varna-Alankara, turned to Gamaka-Sthaya duo, the two factors vitally important for the

unfoldment and creative elaboration of Raga.

According to the speaker Gamaka had much wider scope than usually built around the shaking of Svara and had a function in relation to formulation of Sthayas. The extremely brief definition of Sthaya is a (small) part, and expressive phrase of a Raga. Then, there is an extensive enumeration of ninety-six Sthayas with their categorization and explanation. However, the clue to the commentary saying that an arrangement of Svaras beginning with Amsha and resting on anyone out of Nyasa, Apanyasa etc., is an Avayava or part of Raga.

Prof. Mutatkar explained that her idea in giving these Shastric details was not just to load the learned audience with weighty Shastric premises but truly, to bring home the tremendous wealth of enlightening and imaginative information regarding Prayoga contained in the Shastric core which has so much relevance to the present day practice performance.

Prof. Mutatkar cited a few Sthayas such as Shabada, Lavani, Vadya, Chhaya (Kaku), Svaralaghita, Rage-amsha, Rageshta. Interpreting the Shastric explanations, she went on demonstrating these with clarity in the present day parlance of Hindustani Ragas like Bihag, Chhayanat, Nayaki, Suha, Darbari, Adana, Bilawal, Shankara and others.

Prof. Mutatkar emphasized the need for establishing affinity, links, parallels, similarities, differences between Shastric and colloquial terminology and usage, between Shastric (written) knowledge and traditions, the Sampradaya or Gharana.

In her varied demonstrations, Prof. Mutatkar was ably assisted by her disciple Dr. Sudha Mathur, pupil Nandini Shahane, daughter Sunanda Bagadthey; percussion accompaniment was provided by Pandit Balkishan Sharma; Sarangi by Ustad Sabri Khan and Harmonium by Ustad Mehmood Dhoulpuri.

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VICHITRA SHATA RAGAMALIKA RTP

Ravi Kiran makes history. An intellectual exercise, a remarkable portrayal and exhibition of Lakshana intricacies and a macro Ragam, Tanam, Pallavi in Ragamalika pattern involving a hundred Ragas! A massive and magnificent effort indeed that would have gladdened the hearts of Konerirajapuram Vaidyanatha Ayyar, Kanchi Naina Pillai and Chittoor Subramania Pillai and other Pallavi stalwarts of yester eras.

Chitraveena Ravi Kiran conceived the idea in October and delivered it for Nadopasana in November '95 successfully after a hectic, round-the-clock Asura Sadakam. Adi Tala was chosen for easy appreciation.

Latangi was the main raga; Tanam was in Chala Nata, Padi, Suddhasaveri, Vijayasri and Pushpatilaka. Seven Ragas in the first tempo, three in Tisra Gati and 27 in second tempo. Then rhythmic reduction commenced with

16 Ragas for an Avartana each

16 Ragas for half an Avartana each

8 each for one-fourth and one-eighth of an Avartana.

"For the climax, I chose ten Ragas, Shankarabharanam, Tapasvini, Ragapanjaram, Gambhiranattai, Malavi, Lingapriya Kapi, Pantuvarali, Lalitha and Vijayanagari to be played in relay as the culminating Swara passage before the Korvai in the main Raga-the first syllables of these providing the name Shata Ragamalika Pallavi!", claims Ravi Kiran.

The hectic tempo, the innovative endeavour and its relevance in the context of present practices should have startled many. The enormity of such display and enterprising endeavour need the appreciation of all since it is perhaps the first after the remarkable presentation of Mudicondan Venkataramier.

'Garland' N. Rajagopalan

Chitraveena Ravi Kiran Speaks:

In these days when the significance of and interest in RTP is waning, there is a definite need to bring back public enthusiasm in it by making the RTP more communicative but without sacrificing its values or inherent sophistication. In this presentation of mine, I have made an attempt to present the RTP in a new light by highlighting the emotive melody aspects more without prejudicing the rhythmic side of it. In fact, I am going to try a couple of innovations in the rhythmic side of the Thanam and multi-speed rendering of the Pallavi itself.

"But why a 100-raga RTP?" is a question which many will be asking. The answer is very simple - I just could not resist the temptation! When I first got the idea (on 20th Oct. 1995), it seemed so romantic that I set about putting in a lot of my time, mind and energy into making it highly innovative, but without deviating from the traditional format. I do hope that this will be welcomed by all of you, by God's grace.

The Actualities : The Raga Alapana and Niraval will be in the main Raga only. The Tanam will be in five Ragas which are, for a change, not the usual Nattai, Gowla, Arabhi, Varali and Sri but are very, very close to them nevertheless.

The Pallavi is in Adi Tala and pretty simple for the public to follow even during the multi-speed renditions.

Among the rest of the 95 Ragas for Kalpana Swaras, seven have been selected for the first speed, three for Tisra Gati and 27 will be in the second speed landing at different points in the Pallavi.

Then the Kuraippu or rhythmic reduction will start which is like a countdown to the final climax. 16 Ragas will be used for one cycle (Avarthanam) and another 16 for half-cycle renditions. Now things will move real fast as eight Ragas will be rendered for only one-fourth of the cycle and incredibly, another eight for just one-eighth of the cycle! This part will be challenging and thrilling at the same time as Ragas will be appearing and vanishing at lightning speeds! I confess, this is one place where I will be even more tense and intense than usual!.

By naming all these Ragas I do not want to spoil the fun of the guessers. Suffice to say that most of the Ragas are very popular though a few rare ones like Padi and Gopikatilakam have been included.

For the climax, ten Ragas-Shankarabharanam, Tapasvini, Ragapanjaram, Gambheeranattai, Malavi, Lingapriya, Kapi, Pantuvarali, Lalitha and Vijayanagari will be played in relay as the culminating swara passage before the Korvai in the main raga. Join the first syllable of these ten Ragas and what word do we get? SHATARAGAMALIKA-PALLAVI, of course!

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PANDAL PROGRAMMES

3-DAY NEW YEAR FESTIVAL OF MUSIC

26-1-1996 - FRIDAY - 6.00 P.M.

BOMBAY SISTERS	—	Vocal Music
(Smt. C. Saroja & Smt. C. Lalitha)		
Shri M. A. Sundaresan	—	Violin
Shri Bangalore Arjun Kumar	—	Mridangam
Shri N. Govindarajan	—	Ghatam

27-1-1996 SATURDAY - 6.00 P.M.

Renowned Maestro		
Shri Trivandrum K.S. Gopalakrishnan	—	Flute Recital

28-1-1996 SUNDAY — 6.00 P.M.

Shri O. S. Thiagarajan	—	Vocal Music
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Accompanying Artistes for both the concerts

Shri Mysore M. Nagaraj	—	Violin
Shri Guruvayur Dorai	—	Mridangam
Shri Rajesh Srinivasan	—	Kanjira
Master Shankar Lakshmanan	—	Ghatam

(Shankar Lakshmanan is the the product of Sabha's Sangeetha Vidyalaya under the tutelage of Shri T.S. Nandakumar)

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DANCE DRAMAS BY LATA & GITA DUO

16-3-1996 - Saturday - 6.00 p.m — "VAIBOGAME"

The Dance drama depicts four celestial weddings of Sita, Rukmini, Meenakshi and Valli.

17-3-1996 Sunday - 6.00 p.m. — "SAVITRI"

"SAVITRI" is an adaptation from Sri Aurobindo's epic. The episode of Satyavan - Savitri in the Mahabharata has been invested with yogic dimension by Sri Aurobindo. "This Tamil Dance presentation is a well co-ordinated picture of music, movement, and rhythm" reviews "THE HINDU".

Duo Lata & Gita born two years apart are the progeny of the veteran Tamil Film Director of yore Shri K. Subramaniam and daughters of the renowned T.V. Documentary Producer Dr. Krishnaswamy of Krishnaswamy Associates, Madras, and nieces of the eminent Danseuse Dr. Padma Subramaniam.

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SANGEETHANJALI TO NATION

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— Group singing of National
and Devotional Songs.

10-2-1996 - Saturday - 6.00 P.M.

Dr. (Mrs.) Suma Sudhindra & Party (Bangalore)

— Veena Recital

11-2-1996 Sunday - 6.00 P.M.

Shri Papanasam Ashok Ramani
Shri Delhi P. Sundararajan
Shri Neyveli Narayanan

— Vocal Recital
— Violin
— Mridangam

(Ashok Ramani, the grandson of the Bard
Papanasam Sivan, presents exclusively the immortal
Kritis of Shri Sivan to mark the "Papansaam Sivan Day"
celebration by the Sabha.)

Venue : First Floor Foyer, Sabha Premises

* * *

VAGGEYAKARA DAY CELEBRATIONS
SANGEETANJALI

10-1-1996 SAINT TYAGARAJA 149th ARADHANA

Morning 8.30 A.M. Group rendition of Pancharatna Kritis

Evening 7.00 to 9.30 P.M. Music Concerts

11-1-1996 — 7.00 to 9.30 P.M. — Music Concerts.

20-1-1996 - Saturday - 6.00 P.M. to 9.00 P.M.

SAINT PURANDARADASA DAY

21-1-1996 - Sunday - 6.00 P.M. to 9.00 P.M.

SYAMA SASTRY DAY

24-2-1996 - Saturday - 6.30 P.M. to 8.30 P.M.

VISHNU DIGAMBAR PALUSKAR DAY

23-3-1996 - Saturday - 6.30 P.M. to 8.30 P.M.

VISHNU NARAYAN BHATKHANDE DAY

Venue : First Floor Foyer, Sabha Premises

S. Seshadri
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Hon. Secretaries

SHOWERS OF MELODY

After the monsoon showers of melody from the young 'Stars', who certainly glowed in their melodic glory, it was a return to a more spacious, elaborate Pandal concerts which as usual started with a bang towards the close of November, 1995. From Sabha foyer, to an open-air concert the opening session served as a testimony to the Sabha's promotional efforts.

Only early '95 the young Guitarist from the U.S.A., R. Prasanna, had performed on the Shanmukhananda platform (I Floor foyer), as a rare talent on home visit, but before the close of the year he was promoted to the Pandal Cutcheri and was presented as the opener of the year's winter series. Those who had come to his concert on the earlier occasion were rather curious to know how Karnatak music sounded on Guitar, a purely Western orchestral instrument. Would it stand a 'solo' on a system that is based mainly on Gamaka graces? Would Ragas uniquely Karnatak like Todi, Anandabhairavi, Bhairavi, Kambhoji, etc, come out in their full sustenance and flourish? - were questions many in the audience entertained.

As if to quell the doubts, Prasanna played Ragas and Kritis with uncanny felicity giving the Gamakas their graceful status, and taking the pride of place of adding one more instrument of Western origin to the galaxy of Karnatak Solo. And in the recent concert he made an impress as a performer having acquired greater entertraining skill and blending it with his musical acumen. A grand nephew of the mathematics genius Ramanujam, Prasanna has aimed his experiment at synthesising Karnatak music and Jazz on Guitar. For that he has left his Engineering profession and taken up as a full-time musician. Plus he is studying Western

music at the famous Berkelee College of Music, Boston.

It was quite an experience listening to his Andolika Varnam, Sahana (*Eevasudanivanti*), Bhairavi Swarajathi, Nalinakanti (*Manavyala*) and Hemavati (*Sri Kantimati*) etc. He has a knack of playing the Swaras in their deflective graces and the Sahitya with their intonation, which makes the Swarajathi or Pancharatna Kriti live up to its presentational excellence.

One observed, that gaining more performing experience he moulded his style into greater performing artistry, where the suave, solemn Vilambam slowly gave place to skill and speed. One wondered if he had to alter the instrument to adjust to Karnataka genre. "No", was his answer. Guitar is much closer to Violin and one had only to evolve one's own fingering and that is what he has done, having had his early Vocal training from Tiruvarur Balasubramanian and advanced training from Violinist A. Kanyakumari. "Guitar is a versatile instrument", he asserts.

And he is very clear about his ambition - one to be a performing artiste of Karnatak music, the other to be a composer of his own music, which, he says, would project many influences like Rock, Blues, Jazz etc.

That eminent percussionists like Man-nargudi Easwaran (Mridangam) and Sub-hash Chandran (Ghatam) teamed up with Prasanna, shows the popularity that this youngster enjoys and the sense of duty the seasoned accompanists entertain in giving proper direction and guidance to blossoming talents.

The two-day, November fete was a treat to the ear and the eye, as Guitar in Karnatak idiom was followed the next day

by a visual extravaganza, the Bharata Natyam recital by Malavika Sarukkai, an exponent who has dedicated her life to the art form. Trained at the Rajarajeswari Bharata Natya Kala Mandir under Guru Kalyanasundaram, to begin with, she shifted her headquarters to Madras after Arangetram, and came under the tutelage of Guru Swamimalai Rajaratnam of Vazhuvur School. In course of time she ventured on her own delving into choreographing various themes in dance idiom. Meanwhile she mastered the Odissi style also. Known for her polished Nritta and Anga grace this exponent has retained Sathvik Abhinaya as her forte too. Her recital was reported to be pleasing.

Prior to the recital the Sabha felicitated its Hon. Secretary Sri S. Seshadri for his long innings of devoted Service to the Sabha. Connoisseurs and sister organisations joined in felicitating him. Shri P.R. Krishnamoorthy, Vice Chairman of Board of Trustees of the Sabha, offered a Ponnadai and floral bouquet on behalf of the Sabha.

Consul General of People's Republic of China, His Excellency Zheng Ruixiang and his wife Madam Zheng Ruixiang who graced the programmes were all appreciations for Karnatak music and Bharata Natyam. Imagine the audience's surprise when Madam expressed in chaste Tamil, "Ingu Kuzhumiyirukkum India Kalaignar anaivarukkam engal manamarnda nan-rigal"!

* * *

It was just a 4-count Eka Tala, but what a world of rhythmic fantasies it opened up! One had real education at the hands of the percussion wizards Karaikudi Mani (Mridangam) and Harisankar (Kanjira) in a programme christened "Laya Ratna" at the Fine Arts Cultural Centre, early December, 1995. A Laya Vinyasa with Eka Tala

as a base, but a rhythmic exploration that brought out a kaleidoscopic view of the variations that could be woven with shifting paces and in varying tempi..

A good academic exercise to students of percussion instruments, a unique 'Thani' to general audience, who, for once, followed with keen interest the 'goings on' in the rhythmic front, relishing the 'gems' of 'bols' that emanated from the play. A veritable Laya Ratna, to experience and cherish.

What followed was a recital of flourishes and frescoes by a rising star whose voice is his great fortune. Unlike the poised Vilambam with which he conquered the listeners last year at the Talent Promotion programme at Shanmukhananda, Balaji Shankar this time at Chembur chose to impress as a super performer and a veritable entertainer, though with weighty classical ideas. His Vidwat has increased, and he has further cultivated his voice to gear through super fast Brikha sallies.

'From D. K. Jayaraman - D. K. Pattammal's School of Vilamba grace and sedate artistry, to a presentation of artistic splendour' was what the evening's recital registered. One could well perceive from the pace, and speed and whirligigs influence of T.N. Seshagopalan's musical style.

The very swift opening of N. S. Ramachandran's *Sri Mahaganapathe* (Abhogi) with swirling swaras registered this shift in style, but the following *Sujana Jeevana* ensured the poise and Patanthara of his early Gurukul that he still holds.

Then started a skillful display of imagination and voice power in the Alapanas of Malayamarutam (*Dhanyudevavado*), Simhendramadhyamam (*Rama Rama*) and Mohana (Ragam-Tanam-Pallavi, Truputa Tala-Khanda Nadai). They were aesthetic creations marked for vibrant flourishes and

beautiful frescoes. Dotted with modulated pauses they made pleasing pictures. The Niraval, Swaras reflected impeccable artistry.

The veteran percussionists, Karaikudi Mani and Harisankar made a very encouraging and inspiring support pulling the reins now and then and putting him on the proper direction.

Whilst one admired Balaji's command over his voice and diction, one also wished that he wielded a balance of the Vilambam and Madhyamakala to make a wholesome music that would sustain throughout. Violinist Sundaresan appeared a little too excited often overplaying his 'solo' slot in Alapana with repetitive phrases.

Here is a middle -order musician who has shaken off his urge for the glamour and settled for grace that puts him implicitly on placid plane where music becomes an art of self-enjoyment. Naturally the Rasikas reciprocate in response. Neyveli Santhanagopalan has come a long way on the "Chakkani Raja Margam" in music leaving the frills and frivolities and delving deep into Bhava and Rasa.

His concert at Anushaktinagar for Bhakta Rasika Rajani Sabha was satisfying. Hailing from Seshagopalan's tutelage Santhanagopalan has found his moorings in a more sober, sathvik enuaciation. striking his own on the even-paced Sarvalaghu. One shift in his stance of style however is the emulation of the master -melodist the late Madurai Mani Iyer who went ecstatic on exploring the beaten track and repeating, choice staccato phrases.

The brief sketch of Lathangi sweeping the entire gamut well served as a prelude to *Venkataramana*. Maybe he was in an innovative spirit. Niraval-ling the Charana stance, he wove Swaras to Pallavi, in *Brovabharama* (Bahudari), without impairing the structure. Nalinakanthi's unique

phrase was a peg to hang on a nuancic exploration in Raga as well as Swaras. Bhairavi, the evening's highlight, was delineated in all its grace and glory. To which Delhi Sunderrajan, another middle-order accompanist, fast emerging as a front-liner, added his own melodic flourishes. His style is marked for inspiring subtlety and soft sedate melody. And he is one of the most affable accompanists who has his touch of elevating the quality of the concert.

Neyveli Narayanan (Mridangam) and Bangalore Purushottam (Kanjira) paired with elan.

In a decade of its evolution, one observed Nriya Ganga (Bharata Natyam to Hindustani Music), a brainchild of eminent dancer Sucheta Chapekar, taking a definite shape. It brings on a new dimension to the visual form and the melodic stance of Bharata Natyam. Like Dr. Padma Subramanyam's Bharata Nriyam, Sucheta's Nriya Ganga may come to stay as one more style of the artform.

Presenting her disciples Asavari and Arundhati (also her daughter) danseuse Sucheta came out as a well-organised Choreographer-teacher-conductor of this new genre. Her Nattuvangam attuned to Hindustani Bols was eloquent and she had Nritta passages woven into almost all the items giving the technique a dominant point. Forms of Hindustani compositions were symbolically used.

Sant Ramdas' Keertan, *Tandava Nriyakari*, with a prelude of Ganesh Kavutva, the Ashtamangal, propitiating the Ash-tadik Devatas to melodic Lehra, a Shivastuti, a number that symbolically mingled the components of Varnam and Khayal-like Cheez, highlighting Vasakasajjika, a Natya Sangeet that reflected a folksy Khandita, a Tarana and a Ragamalika -

Bhajan formed the repertoire, and neatly phased out.

A laudable work by an exponent-researcher. Now that the format is set on safe base, it requires a depthwise development, in the Abhinaya phase, expressional Sancharibhavas, for which she could make use of Bol Alaps and other improvisational phases. That may add a facet of Sukhalasya too to Nritya Ganga.

* * *

Rasikas of Karnatak music have often found themselves in a quandary identifying Hindustani Ragas. Many a time they would beam with happy recognition of a Raga only to be disappointed when the announcement came forth from the artiste. What is it that makes them sound so common, even equivalent, yet elusive from one's knowledgeable grip?

A number of speakers have tried to enlighten the audience in drawing a comparison of Karnatak and Hindustani music, and it was Pt. K. G. Ginde who once revealed to the audience how the Raga Sangathees (Sancharas), the Vadi Samvadi occurrence, were taken prime note of in determining a Raga and how there arose two or more Ragas from the same Aroha-Avaroha bases on Purvanga-Pradhan, or Uttaranga. Pradhan Sancharas. While the informed students of music could follow the norms the legendary Pandit offered, the lay Rasikas still groped in the dark. Until the day dawned on 17th December, 1995, when a compact education on "Identifying Hindustani Ragas" was provided by that, inimitable lecturer Smt. Sakuntala Narasimhan.

A performer *par excellence* in both Hindustani and Karnatak Shailies, a musicologist of mark and a natural journalist, Sakuntala has a language flourish and presentational style that captures the audience and enlightens them.

Her very opening phase cleared the haze regarding the Raga parameter that the Karnatak music has a very systematised Raga-Tala norms, and that in Hindustani music the emphasis is not so much on systematisation as on production based on Vadi-Samvadi and the predominance of Time Theory.

It is not that Karnatak music is bereft of allied Ragas. Nayaki- Darbar, Bhairavi-Manji are best examples of their close alliance. But in the use of Prayogas, the Gamaka variance, their identity is established. However, she said, one has to make conscious effort to differentiate.

Whereas in Hindustani system this close alliance is seen in the identical Aroha-Avaroha. The difference emanates from the emphasis that is given to a note or a segment which very much depends upon the time the Raga is assigned. Example: Taking Bhupali and Deshkar, pentatonic Ragas (same as Mohana) Sakuntala illustrated how Deshkar derived its Lakshana, being a morning Raga, bringing in a mood of grandeur by traversing around Uttaranga and emphasizing 'Dha'. Her demonstration of a Dhrupad *Prathasamaya Deshkar Raga Rahata Muni Vichara*, clearly illustrated the point.

The same note patterns fashioned with a shift of emphasis, revolving more around Purvanga, sung in a more relaxed phase with the 'Dha' mildly intoned, heralded the soothing Bhupali of night -genre. Again the "demonstration", the wordings *Darshanadije*, the pleading in the tone, etc showed how the peace of night descended with the singing of Bhupali, a Uttaranga Pradhan Raga.

A combination of Ragas, one with a dominant tone over the other was well displayed in her enunciation of Yamani Bilawal and Yaman Kalyan. Though both belonged to Bilawal family, how one starts

from Bilawal and the other from Yaman she showed. Similarly she paired Darbari - Adana, Marwa-Puriya and laid bare the differences in enunciation.

Hamsadhwani, Shanmukhapriya, Karnatak Ragas now very much part of Hindustani idiom too were treated, enlightening the audience on the mode they were developed in each system.

A very enlightening session it was in which the soft Tabla Sangat provided by Milind Joshi (a staffer of the Sabha's Sangeetha Vidyalaya) enhanced the beauty and maintained the clarity of the demonstration.

* * *

Apart from the Talent Promotion Series and the Pandal Cutcheris, the Sabha organised Vaggeyakara Days and other Sangeethanjali Programmes with a keen interest of bringing forth to public focus 'talent buds' who have been noted in various competitions (inter-Schools, inter-Collegiate or Sabha's annual ones) and other promising students scouted in course of studied observations. Such presentation of talents in Anjali programmes not only served as a sort of talent - exposure but also reflected the styles that are coming into vogue in the metropolis.

The Gamaka-laden free-flow Bani evolved by Vidwan S. Ramachandran (former veteran teacher of the Sangeetha Vidyalaya), and now carried on by his prime disciple Meera Nathan was distinct in Subhalakshmi's vocalism (who has had her grind under Viswalingam of Madras and Rajee Srinivasan) when she opened the Dikshitar Day on Deepavali.

She sang some rare kritis like *Parvatipatim* (Hamsadhwani) preceded by a Sloka in praise of 'Guruguha', *Navarathnamalineem* (Purvikalyani) besides the Sankarabharana Navavarnam.

M.S. Raghavendra's fluency reflected his mentor Shanti Rao's style, tempered with fine graces and rhythmic grip he has acquired under Kalyani Sharma. *Siddhi Vinayakam* (Chamaram), *Akhilandeswari* (*Dwijavanti*) made their mark.

The Day turned out to be the Sabha Students' day as V.P. Sreejit, a Chela of Narayana Bhagavathar, K.V. Narayanaswamy and now under Sakuntala sang with poise *Gopikamanoharam* (Mohana), *Sarasijainabha* (*Nagagandhari*) and *Bhajare* (Kalyani); Mythily from Madurai Vaidyanathan's tutelage and come under Rama Krishnaswamy rendered the *Varakriti*, *Chandram Bhajamanasa* (Asaveri), *Sri Rama Saraswati* (Nasamani) etc.

Radha who had been accompanying the vocalists on the violin did a 2-piece anjali. This student of Seetha Ramakrishnan has the potential to blossom into a fine performer, if she shakes off her nervousness and plays with confidence.

Rising to the occasion as a last minute substitute, Smt Ganga Ramachander, a Diplomate in Music of University of Bombay from the Sabha and a staffer, rendered with Bhava *Vallabha Nayakasya* (Begada), Todi Navavarna and rounded off aptly with *Meenakshimemudam dehi* (Purvikalyani).

The percussionists, Kumar, Sriram, Prasanna, Vivek and others were also from the Vidyalaya under T.S. Nandakumar.

Devotion and discipline marked the celebrations of Swati Tirunal Day and 149th Tyagaraja Aradhana in late December '95 and early January 1996 respectively. (The list of participants in both anjali concerts are published elsewhere.) One point that deserves note is that child artistes of merit were given an opportunity to pay their homage to the Saint of Tiruvayyaru, among whom two of them have been Prize winners in the Sabha's music Competition.

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THE GOLDEN SAGA OF 'SRI RAJARAJESWARI'

The Year 1995. Sri Rajarajeswari Bharata Natya Kala Mandir turned fifty. These golden years depicted the undaunted and dedicated service of the Guru Parampara to the ancient classical artform of Bharata Natyam, and unfolded a significant phase of the saga of six successive generations, which deserved to be etched in letters of gold.

The day 20th October, 1995 was a Red Letter Day in the annals of the Kala Mandir when a year-long Golden Jubilee celebrations to be held in Bombay, and other cities of India, as also throughout the world wherever 'Rajarajeswaris' founded institutions propagating the Tanjore style of Bharata Natyam, was inaugurated by the Governor of Maharashtra, the erudite scholar - administrator, His Excellency Dr. P.C. Alexander at the Nehru Centre. It was a grand function, fabulously organised by the innumerable students and parents, connoisseurs and well-wishers and conducted with traditional grace and grandeur.

Aptly did Dr. V. Subramanian, the President of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations, observed that it was a "historic occasion, a unique celebration in respect of a unique institution". Historic because the celebrations had begun under the headship of Dr. P.C. Alexander who has created a niche for himself in the midst of people of Maharashtra and who is a great administrator, a cultured individual and a fine speaker in English. 'Unique celebration of unique institution, because 50 is not an ordinary landmark for any institution to reach and that too with generations of work continuously and persistently performed; innovative and moving with times and yet preserving the culture and lineage.

True, starting with just 4 students in 1945, under Guru A.T. Govindraj Pillai and his wife Karunambal, the Kala Mandir, with the migration of his father-in-law, the Patriarch maestro, Bharata Vidwan T.P. Kuppiyah Pillai and sons Guru T. K. Mahalingam Pillai and Guru K. Kalyanasundaram, in course of time, grew into a large banyan tree training thousand and more students. Today youngsters Vasanth Kumar and Viswanath are adding their mite to the Guru Parampara, training students of all communities.

The Kala Mandir is the most secular institution having students from all communities, languages, and from all over the world. The one 'golden' ambition of the landmark year is to set up a Natya 'Varsity, a deemed university. It was nothing new. The institution has been there for 50 years. What is aimed at is, as its dynamic Director Guru Kalyanasundaram said, "to provide facilities for students to stay, study and learn the art in close proximity with the Gurus." What was the dream of the founder-Guru Govindraj Pillai, the present Gurus want to make true. The Mandir also proposes to bring out an English and Hindi translations of Panchapakesa Nattuvanar's *Abhinaya Navaneetham* in Tamil.

The Governor's speech was one that everyone cherished. Going nostalgic, he regaled the audience with memories of Tirunelveli, and Tanjore, the Temple town and heart of Tamil culture from where the Guru Parampara hailed. His eloquence and erudition touched one. "Music is not only divine but divinity", he said, and "so also Bharata Natyam."

It is part of temple culture. And Nattuvanars are preservers and propagators of divinity...., and they have preserved it in the midst of sophistication."

"You have not allowed it to be corrupted by cinema culture and cheap gimmicks.... You

have done a great job in the city... You are keeping your identity and individuality and disseminating the knowledge. Your contribution to the cultural history of this city is great. Continuing the Parampara, the lineage and heritage of what your ancestors of Tanjore since Serfoji times did."

A fine bouquet to Rajarajeswari Gurus.

A significant feature of the inaugural celebrations was honouring the early students of the Kala Mandir who are today names to reckon with and have carved a niche for themselves in their respective art streams. Eminent artistes like Damayanti Joshi, Guru Mani, Acharya Parvathi Kumar, Roshan Kumari, Savita Behn, Kamini Kaushal, Nalini Jaywant, Sitara Devi, Hima Devi, Lakshmi Mohan who were honoured with a Ponnadai, Silver plaque and floral bouquet - was veritably a who's who of the World of Fine Arts!

The Mandir instituted a Rolling Trophy of Lord Nataraja, sculpted in Silver, to be given to the winner of the Dance Competition held annually by the University of

Continued from Page 43

Speaking of young talents, it would be pertinent to recall the grand scale in which the Sangeetha Vidyalaya celebrated the 113th birth anniversary of the National poet Mahakavi Subramania Bharatiyar on December 10, 1995. The great poet spoke and sang to his heart's fill invoking the blessings of the Gods and provoking the youth, women and men to rise to the call of duty, to protect, preserve the honour, dignity and Sovereignty of Bharat Mata. His songs covered the entire gamut of human emotions. He had message for everyone right from the child to the old one and composed on every theme, every subject. He stressed the essential unity of all religions, one divinity in multifold manifestations. He upheld the equality of man and woman, highlighted the strength (Shakti) dormant in woman. One can sing endless praise of the Mahakavi but the staffers of the Vidyalaya chose to 'Sing' his praise through their students, junior and seniors, tuning

Bombay and handed it over to Dr. Snehlatha Deshmukh, the Vice-Chancellor.

The function which began with a melodious invocation by Aruna Sayeeram, had select dance items, performed by students of the Kala Mandir. The selections comprised polyglot lyrics from Saint - Singers of India.

Continuing the 'golden' celebrations, the Mandir presented students of its Chembur branch in ensemble dances at Fine Arts Centre in December, while Viji Prakash of Los Angeles came down to India and presented herself and her daughter Mythily in solo performances in the city. Shanti Krishnan from Kerala paid her anjali to the Kala Mandir in a dance performance at Asthika Samaj during Pongal. There were performances at Lucknow Madras, Goa and Guruvayur, to mention a few.

KINNARI

songs on a variety of themes in appropriate Ragas. About 90 of them participated with a dozen of teachers shouldering the tunesmith's job with impeccable ease.

There were Orchestral ensemble with Vocal, Junior Violin Quartet, Senior Veena ensemble, Kids' chorus, and Seniors' Vocal group singing - all making it a grand Bharatiyananjali.

Staffers turned tunesmiths were Kalyani Sharma, Sakuntala, Meera Nathan, Mangalam Muthuswamy, Janaki Natarajan, Visalam Vageeswar, Rama Krishnaswamy and Ganga Ramachander with solid percussion get up given by Jayalakshmi Gopalakrishnan and T.S. Nandakumar.

On the visit of His Holiness Sankaracharya of Sakatapuram to the Sabha, the Acharya was welcomed with Poorna Kumbha and music by teachers.

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SRI SHANMUKHANANDA FINE ARTS & SANGEETHA SABHA (REGD.)

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MAHARAJA SWATI TIRUNAL DAY—24-12-1995 SUNDAY

6.00-6.30	Kum Lata Raman & Smt Susmitha Ravi (Students of Diploma Class under Smt. Kalyani Sharma)	—	Vocal
	Smt. Prema Sundaresan (Disciple of K. Shivakumar & Prof. T. N. Krishnan)	—	Violin
	Shri Satish Krishnamoorthy	—	Mridangam
6.30-7.00 P.M.	Kum. R. Swapnashree (Student of Smt Sulochana Nagarajan)	—	Vocal
	Smt. Parvathy Shankar	—	Violin
	Shri Santiosh Chandran	—	Mridangam
7.00-7.30 P.M.	Kum. Chitra Shankar (Student of Shir T. S. Anantharaman)	—	Vocal
	Smt Parvathi Shankar	—	Violin
	Shri Prasannakumar	—	Mridangam
7.30-8.00 P.M.	Smt. Rama Raghuraman (A graduate in Music, disciple of Srirangam Iyengar, and Shri Chandrasekhara Bhagavathar now on the Staff of Fine Arts Music School, Chembur)	—	Vocal
	Smt. Parvathy Shankar	—	Violin
	Shri K. Kumar	—	Mridangam
8.00-8.30 P.M.	Shri S. Srinivasan (Diplomate in Music of Bombay University from the Sabha, did Advanced Course and continues intensive training under Smt. Kalyani Sharma)	—	Violin
	Smt. Parvathy Shankar	—	Mridangam
	Shri. S. Sriram	—	Mridangam

(All Percussionists are students of Staffer **Shri T. S. Nandakumar**)

* * *

TYAGABRAHMANJALI 10-12-1996 WEDNESDAY

8.30 A.M.	Group rendition of Pancharatna Kritis on 149th Aradhana of Saint Tyagaraja by Artistes, Students & Teachers.		
Concerts			
7.00-7.30 P.M.	Baby Lavanya (Student of Smt Meera Nathan)	—	Vocal
	Kum. Meera Mahadevan	—	Violin
	Master Srivatsan	—	Mridangam
7.30-8.00 P.M.	Smt. Geetha Balakrishnan & Kum Syamala (Students of Smt Mangalam Muthuswamy)	} —	Veena Duet
	Shri Nagarajan	—	Mridangam

8.00-8.30 P.M.	Baby Charumathi Raghuraman (Student of Prof T.N. Krishnan) Shri Kannan	—	Violin
		—	Mridangam
8.30-9.00 P.M.	Kum. Hema Hariharan (Disciple of Bangalore Vijayalakshmi & Chandrasekhara Bhagavathar)	—	Violin
	Kum. Lakshmi Subramanian (Student of Smt. Parvathy Shankar)	—	Mridangam
	Shri P. V. Narayanaswamy	—	Vocal
9.00-9.30 P.M.	Shri Preetham Charandas (Student of Smt. R. Sakuntala)	—	Violin
	Kum. Lakshmi Subramanian	—	Mridangam
	Shri P. V. Narayanaswamy		

11-1-1996 TYAGABRAHMANJALI CONCERTS - THURSDAY

7.00-7.30 P.M.	Kum. Kavitha Jayaraman (Prize Winner - Student of Shri Ramachandra Bhagavathar)	—	Vocal
	Kum. Lakshmi Subramanian	—	Violin
	Shri K. Kumar	—	Mridangan
7.30-8.00 P.M.	Kum. Priya Ramachandran (Student of Smt. Vijaya Viswanath)	—	Veena
	Shri Ramaswamy	—	Violin
8.00-8.30 P.M.	Master Prasanna Venkataraman (Prize Winner - Student of Smt. T.R. Balamani)	—	Vocal
	Kum. Lakshmi Subramanian	—	Violin
	Shri Prasanna Kumar	—	Mridangam
8.30-9.00 P.M.	Smt. Prema Sundaesan	—	Violin
	Shri P. V. Narayanaswamy	—	Mridangam
	Shri Sriram S.	—	Kanjira
9.00-9.30 P.M.	Dr. N. Sekar (Student of Shri P.N. Padmanabhan and Smt. T. R. Balamani)	—	Vocal
	Kum. Lakshmi Subramanian	—	Violin
	Shri N. Ramaswamy	—	Mridangam

(Majority of percussionists are students of **Shri T.S. Nandakumar**)

ANJANEYA UTSAVAM - Chorus rendition by Teachers & Students of Vidyalaya

Mangalam

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